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THE
LIFE AND TEACHINGS
OF JESUS

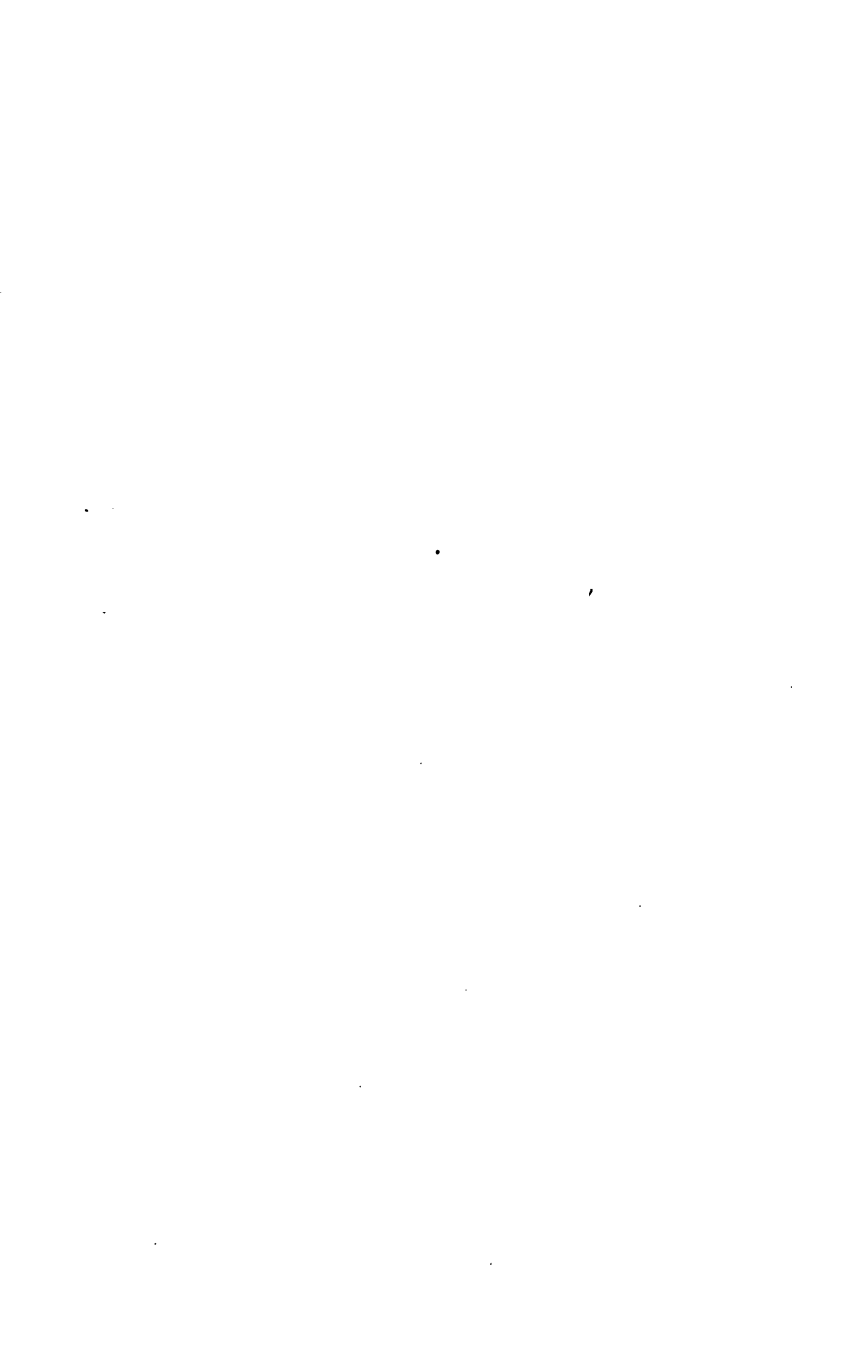
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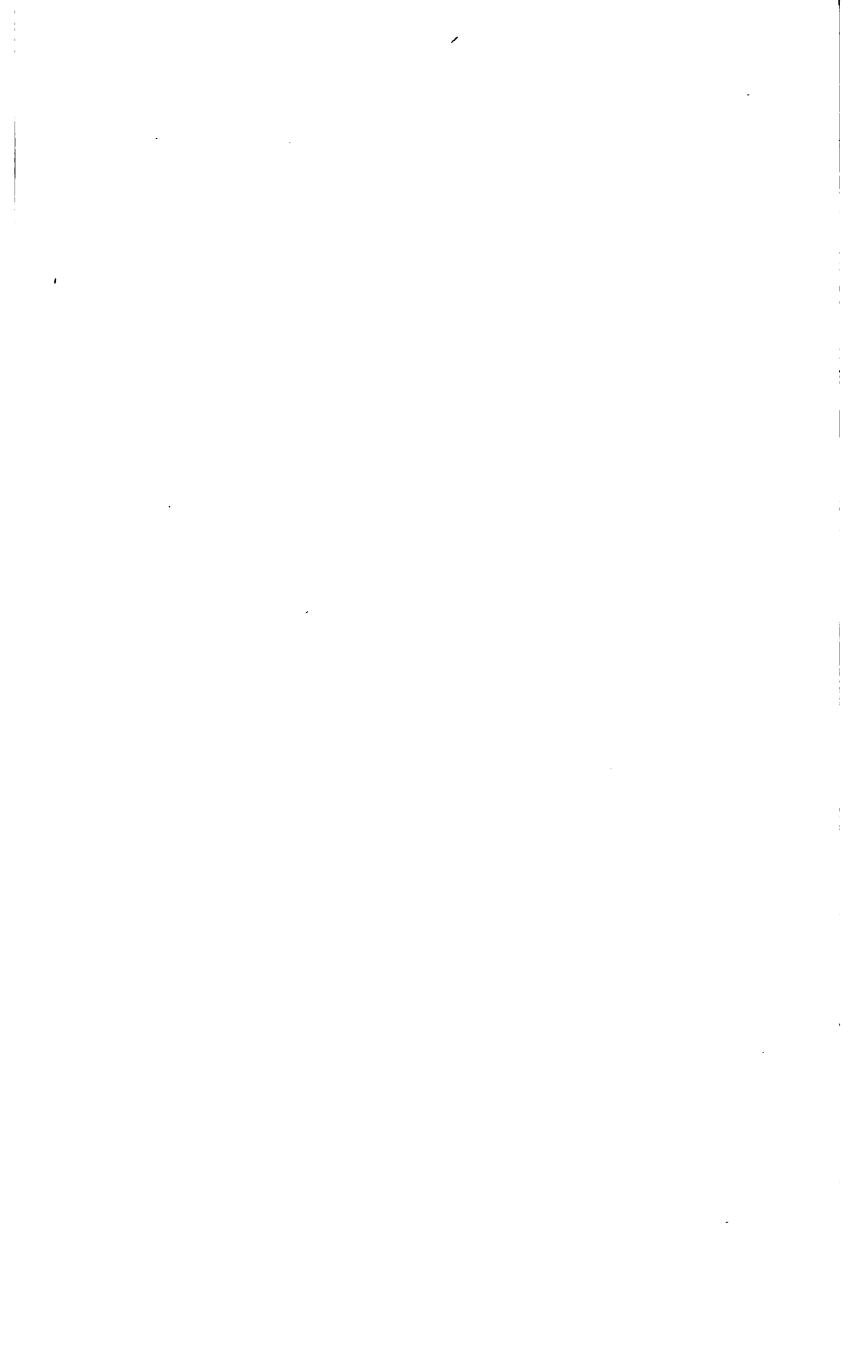
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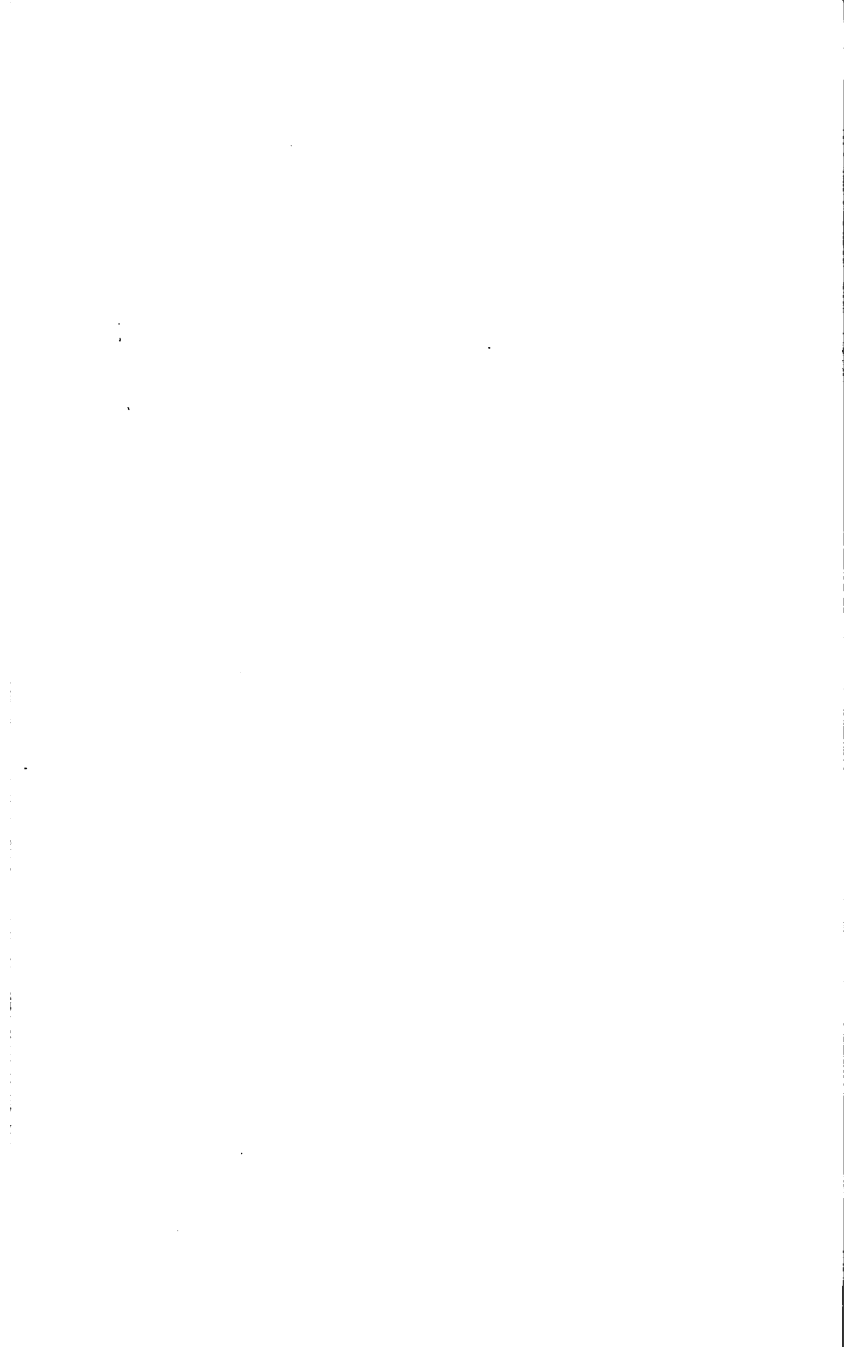


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**THE LIFE AND
TEACHINGS OF JESUS**



**THE LIFE
AND TEACHINGS
OF JESUS**

BY G. H. WALSER



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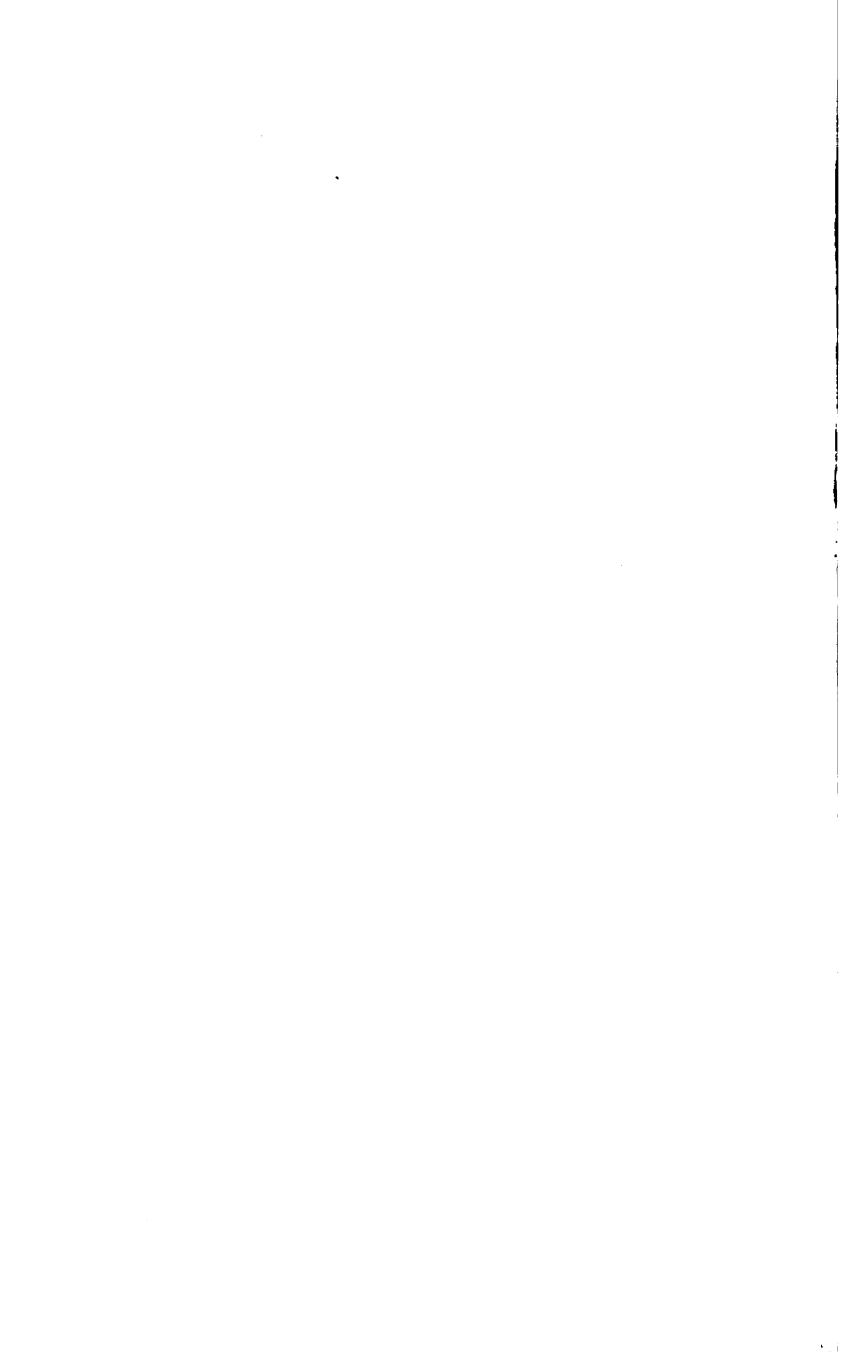
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INTRODUCTION

Why should I attempt to write the life of the Master? Other pens more deft than mine have left their tracings of him, from the shrine of the manger around which angels sang "Glory to God on High," through his trials, tribulations, sorrows, and triumphs, culminating on the Cross and glorified in his ascension as he looked from the throne of love upon those who maligned his mission and persecuted and crucified his body for no cause save that of his unbounded goodness.

Pens endowed with the flame of inspiration have done him justice. The Gospels are in the home of every one, in which the physical life of Jesus is graphically given, and it would be presumptuous in me to attempt to improve on the least of them. The Gospels contain a plain, simple narration of facts that can neither be bettered in the manner of expression, sublime simplicity of style, or order of presentation. Each important occurrence in the life of the Master has been given to the world time and time again, and every phase of his life brought out and explained so that the erudite may be edified, the student instructed, the sorrowing consoled, the devotee strengthened, and the stupid enlightened.

So it would seem an act of superciliousness in anyone to attempt to do more. But it seems to

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me that the life of Jesus has been considered more from a physical, active, man-living standpoint than from that philosophical and spiritual trend of events which gave birth to the necessity of the coming of the Master, and life and character to his outward conduct.

There were two lives of the Master,—one the physical life, the other the spiritual life. The philosophy of his spiritual life came up with the growth of human thought and aspiration from the cradle of the race to his advent, from which the starved soul of humanity received new impetus, which is gathering power, beauty, grace and heavenly virtues as time rolls along, never failing, never swerving, never disappointing, but growing and growing into the fullness of a God-comprehending and God-loving people, the culmination of which will only be when all men are cemented into one brotherhood, where the cry of one is the concern of all, when fraternal sincerity shall be engraved on the lintel of every man's door, and Friendship, Love and Truth imprinted on every heart. This phase of the spiritual life of the Master will mostly claim my attention in this treatise. This phase of his life has never been fully given from my standpoint of mental and spiritual philosophy.

I write from the standpoint of a converted Infidel. I have patiently investigated without bias all sides of mental and spiritual philosophies. All I desire to know is the truth, whose foot-prints

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I will follow wherever it leadeth ; for what is truth for one is truth for all, whether that be divine truth or secular.

The esoteric life of the Master can only be fully appreciated through the aid of the imagination, guided and stimulated by all the facts and events of the world at his time, reverting also to the past and penetrating into the future. The philosophy of the life of Jesus is cosmopolitan ; every chord of human nature may find a harmonizing tone in the spiritual philosophy of Jesus. The full benefits to be derived from the life of the Master must be taken from his surroundings, the necessity of his coming, and the light that he brought with him to the world,— all aided by the imagination. For imagination is the spirit that comprehends the philosophy of human conduct and purposes. It concerns itself not with the act in itself, but with the philosophy of the act. It is to the act as the aroma is to the rose, flavor to the peach, life to the being, as thought is to the expression of the mind. Imagination furnishes the spiritual record of the physical event. Cold history only gives physical conduct ; imagination gives the flavor, pathos, exultation, triumph, sorrow, heart-ache, anguish, remorse, or whatever the mental sensations the act or event inspires. There is an outside and inside to every thing, every motive and act of man. The act is of what history or narration treats, which is the frame-work of the transaction. The motive underlying the

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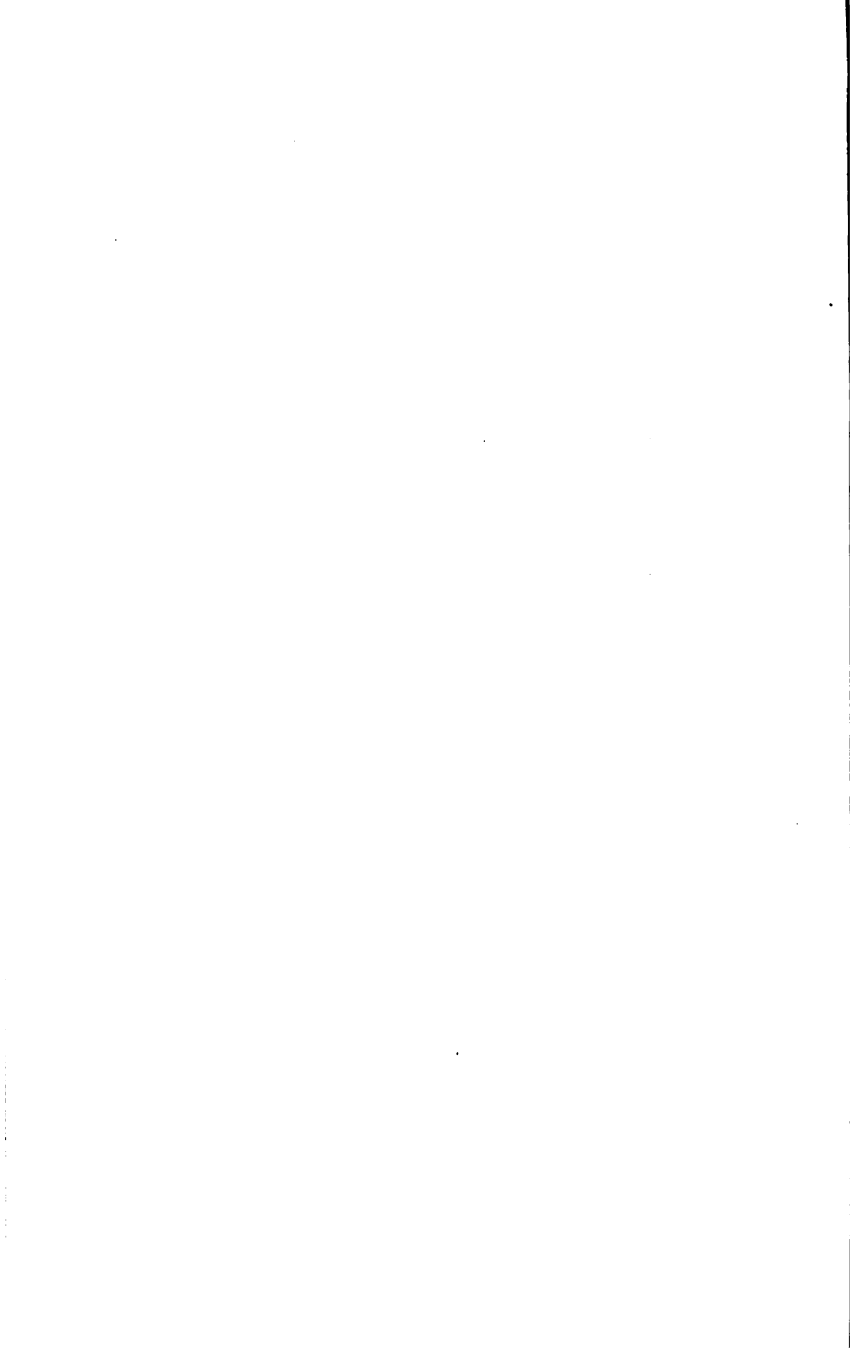
act or transaction, or its effects on others and the outside world, is the philosophy of the transaction.

It is our province, in treating of the life of the Master, to give the spirit of the main events surrounding his ministry, that my readers may see the science of his mission, the motives of his enemies in their persecutions of him, his triumphs in the exposure of wrongs on the one side, and his glories in the demonstration of life after death and the fact that "it is not all of life to live, nor all of death to die," on the other. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John vi, 63.

If we can get the spirit of the life of the Master, we will gain golden emotions coined in the mint of everlasting truth; but to obtain those blessings we must read between the lines, and read with spirit and understanding. We must train our imaginations to the comprehension of Jesus as he was, a sincere, blameless man, undergoing all the hardships and vicissitudes of an unappreciated life that the eyes of an obdurate people might be opened to their own good here and hereafter, with all their certainties of joys or dregs of woe according to the merits of this life.

G. H. W.

**THE LIFE AND
TEACHINGS OF JESUS**





ANCIENT LEARNING

I have wandered in the desert of disbelief, waded the river of doubt, and in the sands of desolation I have looked for hope and found none; my heart ached and my soul sickened, for its measure was not satisfied. I felt that there was something more, there must be something more, or nature is a fraud and life the gall of a bitter cheat.

I looked out and saw struggling humanity vying within itself for prestige. Each man, it would seem, was striving with the rest of the world for place. The strong were overpowering the weak; force seemed to rule; the masses were in a fever of discontent. And in that struggle I saw some fall by the wayside, some perish at the hands of violence, some sicken and die with but one destiny before them all,—and that was the destiny of death. One group passes off the stage and another takes its place; one man steps out and another steps in with like inclinations, struggles, and disappointments.

My soul cried out, "Is there nothing better for man? Is it his destiny to oppress and be oppressed; to wrong and be wronged; to walk in the shades and shadows of strife; to be mocked at

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by deceptive smiles?" Raising my eyes, for I was in the downcast of meditation, I saw in the distance, over the apex of a neighboring hill-top, the skirts of fading night giving place to a roseate morning as it sent its golden ribbons up the bending sky. I kept my eye fastened on the coming light, and directly the sun itself sent a smile of beauty into the dark valley below. As the light penetrated the darkness surrounding the people, they seemed to brighten up; frowns on their faces gave way to smiles; harmony took the place of discord; and I saw strong men kneel at the feet of a little child and humble themselves in its presence.

The spell left me, and I felt as if I had just awakened from a sweet enchantment—a dream—something that was not real, that is, as yet realized; yet it contained a kind of spiritual significance that meant to me a great deal. I went to my home for meditation. I wanted to know the real, but did not know where to find it. Feeling the impress of my mother's early admonitions, I sought the advice of the clergy; but they gave me such a doleful picture of the fall of man and the horrors of the hereafter that my nature revolted, and I fell into the conditions of doubt. That led me out into the field of my own reason and I lapsed into atheism; but I was not satisfied. I feared it was true, yet I hoped for a better ending than that of "eternal sleep without dreams."

I felt that there was a truth somewhere and that someone could impart it to me. I feared to call on the philosophers of old, for they had been called pagans, heathens and worshipers of myths, which poisoned my mind against them. I then went to the Bible to learn of it, and after reading I felt more befogged than ever. I did not understand it. I thought it to be a mixture of imaginations; a compendium of the laws of ancient times for a peculiar people, with scraps of history interblended with their notions of religion, which did not comport with my ideas of what religion is, or at least should be.

My conception was that true religion is the moral development of the human soul. It is not measured by any particular cult, form of words, trained actions, or belief; but it is the soothing elevation of man's higher nature that best fits him for the needs of a proper life according to his environment. Thus in India it may be the enjoyment of good religion to pay adoration to Buddah; in China, to the great prophet Confucius; in Hindostan, to Brahma. The Persians may go to the fountain of truth as expounded by Zoroaster; the Arabs of the desert may be guided by Mahomet; while at the feet of Jesus the millions may see the light and be benefited thereby. If the heart is right, the religion is good for those who profess it. Moreover, it strengthens the mind and enriches the life where reason is the highest oracle of man, as professed by the Free-

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thinkers. The Atheist sees God in the boundless universe, and believes that the culmination of man's duty to man consists in doing right because it is right, and that right living brings its own reward, that "the throne of Honor can only be reached by first going through the temple of Virtue." Religion thrives best in the heart of sincerity, by whatever name you may call it.

Jesus founded no church, built no temple, wrote no creed; nor did he establish a worship. But he did, by example, sooth the sorrowing heart, healed the sick, and inculcated the great principles of the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of God. He inducted the heart into the bosom of love, where righteousness is king and mercy the queen of the empire of the soul. True religion feels not the pangs of jealousy. It allays fanaticism and stays the hand that would injure another. It is fraternal goodness in the garden of love.

As a Freethinker, I was led out into the field of Materialism, Atheism, Agnosticism, and, finally, Spiritualism, and I am ever thankful for my schooling along those lines, for my mind has been broadened, my conceptions brightened, and my nature brought more in harmony with my duty toward my fellow men. In my investigations I have learned to adore the memories of the great thinkers, students and advocates of different schools of thought, and I have found in all of them an honesty of purpose that has won my admiration.

All men and peoples want to be right and are sincere with themselves on the great questions of life, death, and the hereafter. There is no reason why men should deceive themselves on these subjects. All must reap the realities of their lives, whether they know the truth and believe truthfully or not. All individuals came into the world generally alike, but individually different, for no two people are exactly alike; and all must go out generally alike, but individually different, for man is measured according to his life. I find that men differ more in the phraseology and expression of their ideas than they do in the facts themselves. The aims of all men of thought and ability are the same; but some wish to arrive at the goal of their ambition by going one road, while others just as sincere of purpose choose another road. One class is just as honest as the other.

In studying the Bible we must take into consideration the time it was written; the state of the minds of the people; their religion, culture, government; the necessities for the production of each book, and the objects sought to be obtained. The Bible was not written to conserve one purpose alone; but it was written at different times, by different men, for different purposes.

The material forming the basis of the commencement of the Bible narratives covers events that were two thousand five hundred and fifty years in transpiring. Moses began writing the

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Pentateuch in the year 1451 B. C., and the books were eleven hundred and fifty-four years in being produced. The book of Malachi was written 397 years B. C. We need not wonder if we find some inharmony through the work; for each book was to conserve a certain purpose, according to the needs of the people at the time. The same rule prevails at this day; what is a good law for one age may be a bad law for another, for the conditions of human society are constantly changing, and as the needs of the people change, the law must change accordingly.

In writing the life of the Master we must call to our aid the work of society building from the early ages of the Chaldeans, Babylonians, Egyptians, and the Israelites, up to the present time, for the philosophy of the New Testament began in those early ages, and has not yet been concluded, and never will be concluded until society achieves perfection. In presenting the life of Jesus I shall take into consideration every fact, historical, scientific, and otherwise that has a bearing on the subject. I shall endeavor to be faithful, and will be guided by the dictates of truth in all things. In gathering material for the production of this life of Jesus, I have found it profitable to look into the philosophy, beliefs, and teachings of different classes of people, sects, and denominations of the world, and I have not found my efforts barren of good results; and I am thankful that I did, for in my investigations

among the skeptics of the ages, and of philosophers of different cults and schools, I have gained a clearer conception of God and the spiritual mission of Jesus than I could have obtained by studying but one side of the subjects of investigation. One who cannot read both sides of a question is not fit to judge of either side.

In my search among the Grecian philosophers I came across the maxims of Thales, the Milesian, who lived about six hundred years before the birth of Christ; these maxims to me seem to be pure reason on the being of God. "God," he said, "is the most ancient of all beings; he is the author of the universe, which is full of wonders. He is the *Mind* which brought chaos out of confusion into order; he is without beginning and without ending, and nothing is hid from him; nothing can resist the force of fate, but this fate is nothing but the immutable reason and eternal power of Providence." Reasoning on the philosophy of that maxim we must conclude that God is absolute mind. He is intelligence and absolute wisdom; hence he knows every thing, past, present and future.

PYTHAGORAS

Pythagoras, chief of the Italic school, became my ideal master, and I devoured his writings, or what there is left of them, with a zest that filled me, for a while, with his learning and methods. In training his pupils he impressed

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upon them the importance of silent meditation and great purity of morals. No one, he taught, could obtain knowledge of divine things unless the heart was purged of all passions and impurities. Of God he says, "God is neither the object of sense nor subject of passion, but invisible and supremely intelligent. In his body he is like the light, and in his soul he resembles truth. He is the universal spirit that pervades and diffuseth itself over all nature. All beings receive their life from him. There is but one only God, who is not as some are apt to imagine, seated above the world, beyond the orb of the universe; but being all within himself, he seeth all beings that inhabit his immensity. He is the sole principle, the light of heaven, the Father of all. He produces everything, he orders and disposes everything. He is the reason, the life, and the motion of all things."

Subordinate to God were intelligent beings, manifesting themselves to man in various ways; among those beings were gods, heroes, and souls. He considered the first class as a part of the sovereign Mind; next were heroes, or ministers, whose office it was to instruct human souls and raise them up to the position of Divine essence. Pythagoras maintained that unity was the principle of all things, and that from this unity emanated all things. He agreed with Thales that the soul is a self-moving principle, and maintained that when it quits the body it is united

to the soul of the world; that it is not a god, but the work of an eternal god, and that it is immortal on account of its principle.

Regarding the composition of man, Pythagoras taught that it was composed of three parts: a mortal, gross body, a substance he called "the subtile vehicle of the soul," and pure spirit. He held that the pure spirit and the subtile vehicle were born together and were inseparable, and returned after death "to the star from whence they descended,"—a slight difference in wording from St. Paul, but the same ideas. In speaking of the resurrection Paul says, "But some men will say, How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not the body which shall be, but bare grain. So also is the resurrection of the dead; it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. Now this I say, brethren, because flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God."

SOCRATES

Socrates also believed and taught that there was but one eternal principle, with inferior gods which he called demons, or middle spirits between the Infinite and the spirit of man. He claimed that he conversed daily with those de-

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mons, that they advised him and always warned him of danger. This was considered heresy among the Greeks, for which he was tried and found guilty and ordered to drink the deadly hemlock, but was offered his liberty and a commutation of the sentence if he would retract his doctrines, which he refused to do. Truth was more dear to him than life.

Xenophon has left us an abridgment of the theology of that philosopher. Socrates had a friend, Aristodemus, who doubted the existence of God and questioned Socrates on the point. Socrates called the attention of his friend to the beauties and grandeur of nature; to the different forms of mineral, vegetable, and animal life, as well as to the designs of art and the wisdom of man in producing his handiwork for the use and gratification of the finer senses of the race; and finally to his own physical, mental, and spiritual make up.

“Do you believe,” said he to Aristodemus, “can you believe that you are the only intelligent being? You know that you possess but a little particle of that matter which composes the world, a small portion of water that moistens it, a spark of that flame which animates it. Is understanding peculiar to you alone? Have you so engrossed and confined it to yourself that it is to be found no where else? Does blind chance work everything, and is there no such thing as wisdom besides what you have?”

Aristodemus replied that he did not see that wise architect of the world.

Socrates, answering, said, "Neither do you see the soul that governs your own body and regulates all its motions. You might as well conclude that you do nothing yourself with design and reason as maintain that everything in the universe is done by blind chance."

Aristodemus, being unable to answer the arguments of Socrates, acknowledged a Supreme Being, but doubted special providence, not being able to comprehend how the Deity can see everything at once.

Socrates replied: "If the spirit that resides in your body moves and disposes it at its pleasure, why should not that sovereign wisdom which presides over the universe be able likewise to regulate and order everything as it pleases? If your eye can see objects at the distance of several furlongs, why should not the eye of God be able to see everything at once? If your soul can think at the same time upon what is at Athens, in Egypt, and Sicily, why should not the Divine mind be able to take care of everything, being everywhere present at his work?" Socrates, observing that the infidelity of his friend arose from his heart rather than in his mind as an honest searcher after truth, concluded in these words: "O Aristodemus, apply yourself sincerely to worship God; he will enlighten you, and all your doubts will soon be removed."

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That old philosopher comprehended the way to find out the truths of God long before the Master said, "Seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." What a field for contemplation in the foregoing lessons! The first proposition, that the wisdom displayed in the composition and make up of the universe and the harmony revealed therein, could not come by blind chance, demonstrates that since God sees everything. He is everywhere at His work; in other words, God is omnipresent; as the spirit of man is in possession of the body and controls that body at will: so the spirit of God is in everything, as a part of Himself. Who would venture to say that He could not manifest His power in everything, know and see everything, being present in all things?

Democritus, elaborating on the same philosophy, maintained, in his atomic theory, that "force, intelligence, and wisdom reside in every atom of the universe and are manifest in everything." Taking up that idea, I was induced some years ago to publish a book "Orthopædia," in which I elaborated on the subject of "Atomic Intelligence," to which I call the reader's attention for more information on the subject than I can give in this connection.

ARISTOTLE

Among the great thinkers of the world there was none, even Thales himself, that eclipsed

Aristotle in range, variety, and depth of thought. He lived close to the intelligence of the gods, and perceived fundamental truths concerning the occult forces of nature that in some instances have withstood the assaults of time, prejudice, ignorance, and the subtile enemy of progress, superstition. On the being and omnipotence of God he was most clear and convincing. "God," he maintained, "is the eternal and living Being, the most noble of all beings, a substance entirely distinct from matter, without extension, without division, without parts and without succession; who understands everything by one single act, and, continuing himself immovable, gives motion to all things, and enjoys within himself perfect happiness, as knowing and contemplating himself with infinite pleasure." "God is the Supreme Intelligence, which acts with order, proportion, and design, and is the source of all that is good, excellent, and just. That Supreme Mind is by its nature prior to all things; he has a sovereign dominion over all." And again he says: "The first principle is neither fire, nor earth, nor water, nor anything that is the object of sense; but *Spiritual Substance* is the cause of the universe, and the source of all the order and all the beauties, as well as all the motions and all the forms we admire so much in it." While Aristotle believed in the eternity of matter, he also believed in the eternity of spirit, which "permeated, controlled, and classi-

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fied matter into the different entities of the universe."

What a cogent and self-evident conception of God! He is presented as the Supreme Intelligence and Supreme Mind, not as merely *possessing* Supreme Intelligence and Supreme Mind; that is, God is mind and intelligence, as well as spirit, which are infinite in duration, prior to all things, and comprehend all things. There can be but one Infinite which controls all entities in the universe. Is there a later philosopher who has delved deeper or soared higher? In fact, we must go to the ancients for a description of God's nature. The Bible does not attempt to demonstrate the reality of God; His being is treated as an evident fact, without the least effort to prove that God is God.

The ancient Persians erected neither temples, statues, nor altars for the worship of their God. Heroditus, in speaking of them, says: "They think it ridiculous to fancy, like the Greeks, that the gods have any human shape or derive their original from man; they choose the highest mountain for the place of their sacrifices; they use neither libations nor music, nor hallowed bread; but when anyone wishes to sacrifice, he leads the victim into a clean place and wearing a wreath of myrtle about his tire, invokes the god to whom he intends to offer it. The priest is not allowed to pray for his own private good, but for that of the nation in general, each par-

ticular member finding his benefit in the good of the whole." While the Persians believed in one supreme God, they worshiped fire, the sun and stars, as merely visible images of the one Supreme God whom they believed to be the sovereign Lord of nature.

The religion of Zoroaster defines its conception of God as "the first of all incorruptible beings, eternal and unbegotten. He is not compounded of parts. There is nothing equal to Him or like Him. He is the author of all good and is entirely disinterested; the most excellent of all excellent beings, and the wisest of all *Intelligent Nature*; the father of equity, the parent of good laws, self-instructed, self-sufficient, and the first former of nature."

The Orphean religion defines God as "the one unknown being above and prior to all beings, the author of all beings, even of the ether. This exalted being is life, light, and wisdom, which three names express only the one power, which draws all beings, visible and invisible, out of nothing."

According to the Platonic philosophy, there is one Supreme Being, one universal power and mind not dethroned or injured by whatever name may be applied to him. By Jove, Plato meant the Guardian and Governor of the universe, the *Understanding* and the *Mind*. "The Master and the Architect of this great machine," you are not in the wrong if you call him Fate, for he

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is the cause of causes, and everything depends on him. Should you call him Providence, you would fall into no mistake, for it is by his wisdom this world is governed. Should you call him Nature, you will not offend, for it is from him that all beings derive their origin, it is by him that they live and breathe.

David, in a burst of eloquence, soared away on the wings of sublimity, and seasoned the philosophy of the pagans in sacred song.

O Lord thou hast searched me and known me,
Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine uprising,
Thou understandest my thoughts afar off.
Thou compassest my path and my lying down,
And art acquainted with all my ways.
For there is not a word in my tongue
But, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.
Thou hast beset me behind and before
And laid thine hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
It is high, I cannot attain unto it.
Whither shall I go from thy spirit?
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?
If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there.
If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there.
If I take the wings of the morning,
And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there shall thy hand lead me,
And thy right hand shall hold me.
If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me,
Even the night shall be light about me,
Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee,

But the night shineth as the day.
The darkness and the light are both alike to thee,
For thou hast possessed my reins,
Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

EPICURUS

Epicurus, a Greek philosopher, was born in the year 342 B. C. and died in the year 270, at the age of 72. When eighteen years old he went to Athens and became a student of Pamphilus. After an absence of five years he returned to his home in Calophon. At the age of 30 he came again to Athens and opened a school, which soon became popular, and on the strength of his new philosophy he established a community which was a model of its kind and which left on the thinking world the imprints of a great mind. Epicurus flirted the idea of procuring happiness through the emotions of religion, or worship of the gods, contending as a cardinal factor of his philosophy that true and lasting happiness could only be obtained through the exercise of reason. No other school of ancient times ever obtained such cohesive powers as this one; its advocates seemed wedded to its principles, and soon spread its philosophy all through Greece and Rome as well. Though the organization has disappeared as such, yet its philosophy finds lodgment in the minds of many cultured people even up to this day; notwithstanding the prevailing attempt to associate the

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name of Epicurianism with that of lasciviousness, gluttony, and loose physical pleasures. There was nothing more foreign to the tenets of Epicurus than bad morals. As a man, Epicurus was a type of the purest moral rectitude. He taught moderation in eating, and exemplary demeanor in all other associations of life.

He taught that according to the physical development of man, happiness was his highest and greatest aim, which in its purest and most lasting effects could only be obtained through the practice of temperance, chastity, and a healthy intellectual development. To attain to the state of bliss it was necessary to keep all the passions of the mind in a state of equilibrium. This same doctrine was taught by the Stoics; yet they waged a relentless social war on the Epicurians, and perhaps it was they who instigated the libel of training the appetites and passions to insubordinate indulgences. It was the practice then, as it is now among the low and vulgar of mind, to abuse those whom they cannot answer.

Epicurus was a voluminous writer; it is said that he wrote over three hundred volumes, though few of his books are extant. What we have learned of him is chiefly from the writings of Cicero, Pliny, and Lucretius. Reason was the guiding oracle of his life, and bliss the daughter only of supreme repose, shorn of all anxious care and perplexities. He impressed on his school the golden opportunities of the present: the past

should give us no concern, for it was gone never to return; the future was ahead, never to bless us with its smiling kiss.

Reason should be the adviser of every sensuous feeling; through reason the sensations should be so directed that the best results might ensue. Virtue should be cultivated for its benefits by the dictates of reason through charity, peacefulness of mind, temperance, patience, and self-command. All laws are restraints of natural rights and individual actions imposed through the necessities of society. The highest motive of man to do right is induced from self-interest. In the abstract that is true; in morals it is wrong. Repose of mind can only be attained through the observance of the laws of nature and the divinity.

As an expounder of the atomic theory, Epicurus advanced the idea that matter is composed of atoms which are indivisible and unchangeable; although having gravity and filling space, they are infinite in number, shape, and volume. He regarded the universe both as infinite and as a unit which is unchangeable, for the aggregate of matter remains always the same. The universe cannot be the result of divine action; if it was, evil could not exist. All things were formed from the atom drifting through space and finding proper lodgment in the building up of entities and things without a purpose or design. The atoms of fire are pushed upward and form

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the celestial bodies; the more dense atoms settle into atmosphere; while the heavier are precipitated into water and earth. Everything is simply the result of accident: the idea of a divine Creator is but the invention of the human mind.

His play on metaphysics cumbers up the substances making up the human soul, which he places at four; one is warmth, one air, one breath, and one an unknown substance. The three first are distributed through the whole of the body: the fourth has its seat in the pectorial cavity, and this he denominates the soul of the soul. The soul is not immortal, but dies with the body. Death should not be reckoned an evil, because on its visitation all consciousness is annihilated, and eternal repose, without troubles or dreams, is the common lot of man!

The only real standard of truth is knowledge instructed through the action of the senses. The gods are living beings possessing human shape, but of colossal proportions. They are immortal and live in eternal bliss, in the sublime enjoyment of wisdom and virtue, without concern for the affairs of man. Their home is in the spaces between the celestial bodies.

DEMOCRITUS

In looking back over the list of great thinkers during the philosophic age of Greece and Rome, none strikes us with more force than that of Democritus. His wonderful range of thought

embraced an astonishing number of subjects on which he wrote treatises, but unfortunately for the world, the most of them are only known from the list of titles that survived the hands of the spoiler. He wrote treatises on physics, geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, optics, geography, zoology, botany, medicine, music, grammar, history, poetry and ethics, besides his great crowning thesis on his Atomic Theory and its application to cosmology and physics, which work is also in the hidden womb of time, and we can arrive at what he had to say on these subjects only from references gleaned from other writers and critics. Dionysius places the name of Democritus first, in classifying the great minds of a few centuries before Christ, in which lived and wrote the flowing genius of that philosophical age, which yet adorns the human intellect, and instructs the thought of investigating minds.

To his atomic theory only will space be given here. He advanced the idea that the atom was the basis of all things; that the atom and its derivatives comprehend the whole of nature and compose every element in the compound of the universe; that in the deific idea of the existence of gods, demons, and souls, they were but the creatures of thought excited through the manifestations of nature and woven into individualizations by imaginative poets and dreamers, though he did not deny that divinations, dreams, prophecies, and warnings of approaching events

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were ofttimes impressed on the mind, principally during sleep.

In his atomic theory he classified all the degrees of human intelligence, sensations, and thought as atomic materialities, produced from atomic impressions from without. The thought impressions that are manifest in the mind are determined by mental effluvia of atomic structure; they form images in the mind, the seat of which is the brain, and those images find expression in thoughts communicated from person to person through the power of speech. God was nothing in his system; there was naught but atomic materiality. Death destroyed the structure of all things, and at that climax dissolution took place, the atoms being resolved back to their original properties and activities.

ANAXAGORAS

Anaxagoras was an Ionian, who was born 500 B. C. and died 428 B. C. He rejected wealth and honors that he might devote his life to meditation and philosophy. During his early studies, in order to have more advantages than he could in his native town, he went to Athens, where he lived in close intimacy with Pericles. It was very fortunate that he did so, because for his new and scientific ideas he aroused the ire of some of the priests of Greece, which led to his arrest on a charge of impiety. He was condemned to die, for the accusation of straying

from the dogmas of the priesthood in those days was equivalent to condemnation and death; but he was saved this extreme penalty through the influence of Pericles, and received a sentence of banishment instead. He retired to Lampsacus, where he soon afterwards died in abject poverty.

Anaxagoras was supposed to be the first among the Greeks who conceived the idea of God as a Divine Mind acting upon matter with conscious intelligence and design. He denied the prevalent idea that the sun was a deity, but claimed that it was an inanimate, fiery mass and, therefore, not a proper object of worship. He asserted that the miraculous appearances were nothing more than the manifestations of nature and could be explained by natural laws. He made many discoveries in both mathematics and astronomy. He suggested that the moon emitted her light by reflection from the rays of the sun, and he rightly explained solar and lunar eclipses.

These assertions brought him into great danger. The people whom he would enlighten would not allow him to stand between them and their conception that the sun was a god to which they should pay adoration.

On one occasion, an Athenian priest having predicted disasters to the state from the appearance of a ram with a single horn, he opened the head of the animal and showed the peculiar structure which prevented the growth of the other

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horn. He exposed the myths of Homer and explained the names of the gods by allegory.

For those teachings he was condemned to die. When informed of the sentence he said that was nothing new, that nature had passed that penalty on him before he was born. When he was asked what should be done with his remains after the execution, he replied: "It makes no difference to me; the road on the other side of the grave is just as long from one place as from another."

What a curse dogmatism in religion has been to the world! All the sciences have come up through religious opposition. I do not wish to be understood as applying these innuendoes to the true elevation of religious devotion, for true religion is clear of such charges. The charges rest against man-made dogmas, which have been enemies to all kinds of progress from time immemorial.

THE STOIC PHILOSOPHY

The Stoic philosophy was builded on the esthetic beauty of mind-culture. It regarded the highest culture of man to be the proper development of his reason, through which true happiness alone can be obtained. On that theory it sought to construct society. It wove around the soul of humanity the purest imagination, and with it soared away to the region of elevated thought and associated the imagery of man with Divine conceptions clothed in flesh. It sought

to deal with the nature of man as he should be rather than as he was, and upon that plane it builded its philosophy and science of life.

The Epicureans considered man as a sensuous being, and treated him as a flesh-born creature endowed with a mind, but moved by emotions, passions, energy, self-interest, and human will subject to misrule and wrong actions impelled by his nature. Viewing him thus, it sought to better his conditions through the culture of his faculties associated with his senses. In other words, the one philosophy dealt with man in an esthetic manner; the other in a sensuous manner.

The Stoic and Christian philosophies of life are so nearly alike that, metaphorically speaking, we might call them brother and sister in aim and thought. Saint Jerome, in his enthusiastic admiration of their likeness, exclaimed, "*Stoici nostro dogmati in plerisque concorat.*" Seneca, the great Stoic moralist, was called *en pene noster*. Montesquien said, "If I could for one moment forget that I was a Christian, I would not hesitate to account the extinction of the Stoic cult among the misfortunes of mankind." While Stoicism advocates a high culture, perhaps too esthetic for common application, yet we must keep in mind the old adage, "When you let fly the arrow, aim at the moon; you will not hit the moon, but it will fly higher than if your aim was on a level." The moral is, keep in mind the highest culture. Did we not daily strive to

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keep in mind a higher manhood, the race would relapse into barbarism and we would be contending with wild beasts for the mastery of caves to dwell in.

The name Stoic was derived from the school of Zeno, founded by him in Athens, from his practice of giving his instructions in an open porch or colonnade; hence "stoic" means porch. Zeno, the founder of this school, was born at Citim, in the isle of Cyprus, about the year 362 B. C., and died about 264 B. C. He started in life as a merchant, in partnership with his father, but having suffered great losses from the destruction of a cargo of goods by shipwreck, he quit his business as a merchant, and going to Athens opened up his school, and remained at its head for fifty-eight years, dying at the advanced age of 98. He enjoyed the respect and esteem of the citizens of Athens for his austerity of life and boldness of language. Through his watchful care over the morals of the youths and his instruction to them in the principles of wisdom and virtue, giving his own life as an example, he deserved so well of the republic that at his death he was awarded a crown of gold.

According to the theory of Zeno, before there was a heaven or earth there was a universal substance or pneuma: this comprehended everything, even the elements of God. By an action of the pneuma a refining process took place, and out of the essence of being emerged a deific force named

God, which embraced, assimilated, and comprehended everything. To the question, "What is God," the answer came back, "What is God not?" The original state of God, pneuma, and the world were indential.

Pneuma is the vital spirit of everything. It is pure reason. It is eternal, the embodiment of the all of the universe; while the soul, being individualized in man, is mortal if corrupted by sin in this stage of existence. If the man lived a pure and upright life here, at death he goes to the regions of Elesia, and is finally blended into the pneuma of the universe, in which he is swallowed up and becomes as God in wisdom and bliss.

It was the teaching of the Stoics that from the soul arises all our sensations, mind-forces, will-power, reason, and judgment; that the physical body moves as the soul thinks or reasons; that the soul fills the entire body of man, guiding and pressing him on, moulding and giving him character as a rational being. Like unto man, the soul of God penetrates the earth and controls it. The soul of the universe is a mode of the activity of God and is of His being.

Pleasure and the motives that move man to their enjoyment are founded, according to the Stoic teachings, in self-preservation. Epicurus taught that the motive law of pleasure is the instructive activities of the physical senses. According to Zeno, the activities of pleasure lead to decay and death, as the bloom of the flower por-

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tends withering and decay. Zeno endeavored to impress on his students the importance of living according to nature. The perfection of anything is called its virtue; the virtue of man is the perfection of his soul.

Zeno, in his ideal republic, advanced the theory that exclusive family government should not exist. There should be neither law, courts, schools, temples, money, nor individual holdings, but all should be merged into one common good. There should be no difference between a Greek or a barbarian, bond or free, male or female, but all should be recognized as equal and share equal benefits and bear equally the burdens. There should be neither rich nor poor among the members of society. There ought to be but one law, and that law should be the law of God which he had evolved from himself.

ANAXIMANDER

Passing from the high ideals of God and esthetic morality, we come to another class of thinkers whose conclusions and philosophies are entirely different from those just considered. We first meet an old Grecian, Anaximander, who was born in 611 B. C. He believed that the universe was at first an unlimited mass of matter, of extremely small particles, eternal in duration, subject neither to old age nor to decay. From this mass of matter a series of beings were continually issuing, which were supplied and fed

with fresh incoming matter. This vast mass seemed to possess energy and intelligence. It embraced everything and directed the movements of all things. Out of this limitless mass sprang a central mass, this earth of ours, which was cylindrical in shape and poised equidistant from surrounding orbs of fire which had originally clung to the earth-mass like bark round a tree until they parted into several wheel-shaped and fire-filled bubbles of air. Man and animals sprang into existence from this central earth-mass; first came animals, and from certain species of animals sprang man, or perhaps from the water. This endless mass was the prime cause of motion and separate existence and individual forms. In due time all individual forms and existences would die, and the earth itself would disappear and go back into its former condition in the mass of matter whence it came. Death and decay were caused from some sin, the penalty of which was a return to the immensity of matter out of which all things had emerged. He held that matter created every entity in existence, or, in other words, that matter was God, outside of which there was nothing.

CARNEADES

Carneades, a Greek, left his impression on humanity through ideas gathered from physical observations of natural objects, which still impress uncultured minds in spiritual philosophy to a

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considerable extent, but his teachings gave rise to no school or society. Many ask, like Carneades, if God is all-powerful, good, and wise, why he permits so much misery, strife, contention, crime, and sin to exist. Carneades was born about the year 213 B. C. and died about 129 B. C.

He was the most powerful of the ancient skeptics. He seemed not to believe in the truth of anything, "Experience," he averred, "clearly shows that there are no true impressions; that every impression on the human organism, whether mental, physical, or moral, was subject to conditions and uncertainties. He saw no motive in nature: everything was chance, produced by force without motive. There is no criterion of truth, no certainty in anything that could be relied upon as stable. Everything is in a state of change: what is to-day is not to-morrow.

In pointing to the evils that befall man, he asserted that they were in evidence against the existence of a divine, superintending Providence; that the world is but the product of natural forces and that there is no proof to the contrary; that matter and its forces produce everything; that the idea of God is but a figment of the mind; that things are a sequence of natural forces, because they have to be as a necessity of natural combinations of matter. Virtue is a natural attribute of nature, since, being relative, it cannot be an attribute of God; for what is

virtuous in one place and among some people is considered an evil in another place and among other people. There is no such thing as absolute intelligence embodied in a divine Being; what there is in nature is produced through the force of conditions.

LUCRETIVS

Among great atheistic advocates of ancient times, Lucretius, a Roman philosopher and poet, stands at the head. He was a great thinker and was possessed of such wonderful powers of language and description that if one is not convinced by his logic he is charmed by his manner. Lucretius was born about the year 95 B. C. and died by his own hand at the age of 44. He was the greatest of the didactic poets, and left to the world, as an inheritance of sublime thought clothed in the purest diction, six books of a poem entitled "The Nature Of Things." While the subjects treated in this poem are dry to the general reader, his linguistic ability has lent his writings a charm that is both fascinating and instructive. Although we may not believe in his philosophy, we cannot but be interested in his presentation of the state of philosophy and scientific learning of those times, for no other writer has more fully explained the metaphysics, cosmology and science of that day.

Lucretius was a profound thinker, and was most sincere in his belief. He succeeded at least

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in convincing himself of the truth of his philosophy and, in fact, many of his ideas have adhered to the minds of men even to this day, especially the dregs of his central idea of God, life, death, and the future state. The basic principles of the atomic theory advocated by Epicurus, and later by Democritus, were embraced by Lucretius. Matter is the all-creative force of the universe, in contradistinction to the Stoic philosophy, which places all power, intelligence, wisdom, and dominion over nature in a Universal Spiritual Mind. Lucretius, through the medium of a high order of poetry, taught the doctrine that there are but two infinities,—one that of atoms, and the other that of a void. He taught that matter had, in its potentiality, every necessary element of combining itself into all the different entities, powers, and forces with which the universe is pregnant.

Matter, he advocated, is composed of atoms infinite in number, shapes and densities. By their nature they are always in motion, and through their restless, mobile powers they have fitted themselves into the building of all the different things of earth and heaven. His novel theory may be summarized in this way: those infinitesimal atoms fill the entire void of nature, and are eternally in the struggle for places in the building up of entities, substances and forces; by their different shapes and densities they are enabled to build everything that is in existence;

in their atomic struggle for place, if an atom gets into a wrong place it is crowded out and on until it finds its proper place; every atom must fit where it properly belongs, on the same principle that the architect of a building or structure has a stone for each particular place in the edifice, and if a wrong stone is brought it is pushed aside and the proper one found to fill the void. Thus, by an eternal struggle of things, through the force of their own natures, they produced all things from necessity and not from an intelligent adaptation or guidance of a supreme power.

Lucretius argued against the proposition of the meddling of the gods in the concerns of the world, for the reason, he maintained, that the gods were like unto men, but much larger; that they inhabited the interstellar spaces between the orbs of heaven; that their happiness consisted in absolute rest and inactivity, and, therefore, they would not have their halcyon joys disturbed by engaging in the perplexities of world-making; and again, there are so many defects in nature that the gods in their wisdom would have remedied them and turned the world off without any incongruities. Had the gods been the architects of the world, there would not have been any such a thing as evil; everything would have been so constructed that absolute harmony would be the dominant factor of nature.

"I am ready to affirm," he says, "led by many other circumstances, to maintain that the nature

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of the world has by no means been made for us by divine power. If you would keep in mind and observe nature to be free and clear of her haughty lords, you would comprehend her doing all things without the intermeddling of the gods; for I appeal to the holy breast of the gods, who in tranquil peace pass their time and unruffled existence: Who can control the sum of nature? Who can hold in his hands the strong reins of the immeasurable deep? Who can make at once all the different heavens roll, and warm with ethereal fires all the fruitful earth, or be present in all places at all times, to bring darkness with clouds and shake with noise heaven's serene expanse, hurl bolts of lightning, and often throw down his own temples, spend his rage in practicing bolts, which often pass the guilty and strike dead the innocent and unoffending? Did the gods rule, sickness, sorrow, heart-aches, and disease would have been supplanted by health, joy, and happiness."

From nothing, he declared, nothing could be produced, and when a thing was once produced the elements out of which it was constructed could not be destroyed. Nature is self-reproducing; when a thing dies, something else takes its place. Nothing can be produced except on the death of some other thing; thus life and death are eternally taking from and supplying each other from their own forces, and not from any outside powers or intelligences. He asserted

that it was fallacious to assert that God is the sum of all, or can be in all places and conditions at the same time.

The writings of Lucretius are especially interesting in showing the state of mental culture at his day. It reveals a very strong mentality among the philosophers endowed with original thought, for they had no guidance but that of reason, and they could but reason from physical causes to problematic effects, while we have the wisdom of the entire past to draw from. There had been a glimmering of thought sent out that the earth was inhabited on both sides, that it was swimming in the atmosphere, and that the sun, moon, and stars went around the earth producing night on one side and day on the other at the same time. This theory Lucretius condemned in the strongest terms.

"The sun and moon," he said, "are no larger than they seem to our sight; they are controlled in their circuit around our world by a current of air. The shifting of the air causes the shifting and changing of the courses and motions of the planets. The air pushes the sun and moon around and under the earth. The idea is preposterous that people live on the under side of the earth; they would be standing on their heads, and of course topple over. There is no outside or inside to the universe: all is the center thereof. Matter pressing on matter has the effect of holding all things in their places."

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Lucretius maintains most strongly that the mind of man and the soul are mortal and die with the body. "I would say," he says, "that the mind, which we often call our understanding, in which dwell the directing and governing principles of life, is no less a part of the man than his hand and foot, and is a part of the whole living creature. I assert that the mind and the soul are kept together in close union and are made up of the same nature, but that directing principle which we call mind is in the head, so to speak, and reigns paramount in the whole body. It has a fixed seat in the middle of the breast; here throbs fear and apprehension, soothing joys, and the emotions of the soul. When the mind is excited by some vehement apprehension, we see the whole soul feel in unison through all the limbs; sweats and paleness spread over the whole body, the tongue falters, the voice dies away, a mist covers the eyes, the ears tingle, and the limbs sink under one; in short, we often see men drop down through terror of mind. This same principle teaches us that the nature of mind and soul are bodily. Now mark me, that you may know that the mind and souls of living creatures have birth and are mortal."

Lucretius believed that both mind and soul are substances, of fine qualities. "When I choose to speak of the soul," he says, "showing it to be mortal, believe that I speak of the mind as well, inasmuch as both make up one thing and

are one united substance." Lucretius regarded death, soothed with an unwaking sleep, as far preferable to a continued life after death. He brings us the ancient conception of punishment after death, with its horrors which eternal sleep alone could escape. Tityus laid in Acheron with birds eating the vitals, never exhausted, never ceasing, always replenishing the torn flesh severed by beak and claw; Tantalus forever rolling up the hill the pressing rock, forever falling, forever falling back upon him again; Sisyphus yearning for power, to strive and to fail eternally; hunger, gnawing hunger, cramping the vitals, with sweet, rich viands always in reach, but never to be obtained,—these were pictures of the horrors of the dead that made his philosophy of death far preferable to a continued existence.

Under certain circumstances Lucretius advocated suicide, and the force of his thoughts on this subject was doubtless the cause of his death. At the early age of forty-four years, he severed the thread of life by taking a love philtre, as it is said, which dethroned his reason and put out his light. "If the nature of things could have the power of speech," he said, "your ears would be regaled with the wisdom of expediency. What hast thou, O mortal, so much at heart that thou goest such lengths in sickly sorrow? Why bemoan and bewail death? Why not, then, take thy departure like a guest filled with life and with

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resignation? Thou fool, enter upon untold rest. Why seek to make additions to what is wasted perversely in its turn and lost utterly without avail? Why not rather make an end of life and travail? ” He did it; he reaped the fruits of his philosophy and of his disappointment on uncovering his eyes and viewing eternity hovering over a suicide, a self-murderer gasping in his own guilt, with no one to forgive.

JUSTIN MARTYR

We now turn to the Christian fathers, among the first of whom was Justin Martyr. The birth of Justin Martyr is variously estimated at A. D. 89, 103, 114, and 118. In his youth he studied the Greek philosophy. He was a great lover of truth. He followed the dictates of his better judgment wherever it might lead him, regardless of results. That love of truth led him into many beliefs. First he was a Stoic, then a peripatetic, and, finally, a Platonist. While meditating by the seaside on the Platonic doctrine of ideas, an old man of meek and venerable aspect impressed on his mind that although Plato was the most illustrious of all the heathen philosophers, he was ignorant of many things, and recommended to him the beauties of the Hebrew Prophets. This attracted his attention to the philosophy of the Master, and the result was he became a Christian. After that he refused to sacrifice to the heathen gods. This

so enraged Marcus Aurelius that he caused his arrest and trial for heresy. He was convicted, as a matter of course, and executed on the very day of his conviction.

Justin Martyr was one of the first exponents of the "New Religion," but it is quite difficult to determine, at this late day, what Gospels he used in his comments. It is quite evident that he did not use any of the Synoptic Gospels, for he does not refer to them either in his two "Apologies," or his "Dialogue with Trypho"; but he very frequently referred to the "Memoirs of the Gospels." It is evident that at that time there were writings relating to the life of Jesus other than what we have now. Another significant fact is that his quotations in many instances differed from the Synoptic Gospels.

Justin Martyr, living in the atmosphere of the early Gospels and believing in them, gave utterance to sayings which, with those of other great thinkers of the time, have ripened and are still ripening into spiritual enlightenment for the race. He was among the first who tried to reconcile philosophy and Christianity. He believed in a future life and confidently expected to share a blessed immortality.

ORIGEN

The most learned of the Christian fathers was Origen, who was born about the year A. D. 185 and died A. D. 254. He laid down the rules

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of the science of the church. There is a philosophy attending everything; everything that exists is governed by laws peculiar to its manifestation. A thing, thought, or action cannot be, unless it manifests itself according to its nature. So there is a science of the church, or a church-science which harmonizes, or attempts to harmonize, man with the being and essence of God.

Origen labored to make manifest this harmony. He was the founder of Christian theology. He did not attempt the strained idea that the Christian religion was entirely new in its conceptions; he was wise enough to comprehend the fact that while there are new presentations of truths, the truths based on principles are eternal factors of nature, and are taught over and over again by different philosophers, different nations, and different ages. What one age forgets another revives. Origen believed in sacred oracles, that is, in the guidance and commands of God to man, under certain conditions. With that truth he maintained that the sacred oracles of the Christian's God embraced all the ideals of antiquity. In his exegesis of the scriptures he compared the teachings of the Christians with that of Plato, Aristotle, Numenius, and corroborated all the Christian dogmas by them.

EUSEBIUS CÆSARA

Eusebius Cæsara was the most voluminous writer among the Christian fathers; it is said he

wrote no less than six thousand books. If the number approximates the truth, the size of the volumes must have been exceedingly small; however it may be, he is accredited as a standard authority among all Christian nations. He was born about the year 270 A. D. He held the confidence of Saint Augustine, and had the distinguished honor of a seat on the right hand of the emperor during the sitting of the council of Nice. It was he who drew up the Nicene creed, which was accepted, with some additions, by that council. He was a warm friend of Arius, and did what he could, though in vain, to harmonize the opinions of the Arian sect of Christians with that of the Alexandrians.

Eusebius maintained that the law of Moses had only a local character and was not intended for a universal religion, and gave examples in proof of his opinion, reciting the 34th chapter of Exodus and especially the 23rd verse: "Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel." He agreed with the old pagan philosophers as to the being of God, who, he says, "is the primal substance, exalted in his *supreme essence* above all plurality. He is a Being absolutely."

JEROME

Jerome is, next to Origen, the most learned student of the Bible among the Latin ecclesiastical writers. He was the only one of the

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Christian scholars, previous to modern times, able to read the Bible in the original Hebrew. He is supposed to have been born A. D. 337 and died about 420. He was a native of Bornia Stridon Dalmatia. He led the life of a hermit in a Syrian desert. In studying the Bible he employed symbolisms, allegories, and mysticisms. He held that there are secret meanings to divine things in the Bible that can only be understood by those learned in them, and that they are not intended for the masses or unlearned,—in other words, that the Bible is but a ritual interwoven with historical incidents, in which the deepest science of life and knowledge of God are found. Philo, the great Jewish historian, maintains the same opinion.

CLEMENT

Clement was one of the Christian fathers, a contemporary worker with Paul. He was not only a great writer but a great thinker as well. He regarded Christianity as a philosophy starting back in the pagan ages of the world, and gradually growing up to the final culmination of truth manifested in the life and teaching of Jesus. It was the laudable aim of the ancient philosophers to attain to a higher, holier, and more perfect life, which was also the aim of Christianity, with this difference: the Greek philosophers had only glimpses of truth, only a conception of Divine perfection, while absolute

and perfect spiritual truth was revealed in Christ.

Clement taught that the care of God was not confined to the Hebrews alone, but that all the stages of man's development, from the earliest up, led to the full revelation of God's will. The worship of the heavenly bodies, he maintained, was necessary to raise the minds of men to the sublime contemplation and adoration of the Creator. He held the Hebrew Scriptures in high esteem. Plato's best thoughts, he said, were taken from the Hebrew prophets. He taught that Jesus was *logos* and absolute reason.

Clement believed in a personal God, apart from the universe, and that the reason of God culminated in the personal son, Jesus. His theory of salvation was that it began with faith, passed from faith into love, and ended in full and complete knowledge. He believed in the eternal existence of Christ, that He instructed men before He came into the world as a physical being, and that heathenism was used as an instrument to lead men into a higher conception of the Divine.

It is supposed that Clement is the same man whom Paul mentions in the fourth chapter of his Epistles to the Philippians: "And I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellow, help these women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow laborers, whose names are in the book of life."

II

BEFORE THE TIME OF JESUS

There is a growing tendency among the people of this age to relegate the Bible to the rubbish-basket of literature, and to esteem it only a relic of ignorant ages and unworthy of the credence heretofore given it. Where it was once held and revered as a sacred volume containing the word and will of God, it is now criticized by the skeptic and unhallowed by a large body of the people. Ministers give tacit coloring to these views through their inability to reconcile its contents with the known truths of to-day, and if this tendency is not averted reverence for the Bible among the people will be lost.

I have been a student of the Bible for many years, as well as a student of theology, a free-thought investigator, a skeptic, an atheist, a disbeliever, but living always with the one prayer in my soul, "Give me Light and give me Knowledge." With that prayer in my heart, with honesty of purpose in my soul, my mind has been opened to this one thought, and as I once asked the thinking world to take the Bible from the family altar, keep it from the schools, deny it a place in polite literature, hurl it back as a libel

on the intelligence of God, now my admonition is: Seek to understand the Bible,—and when you do you will cherish and love it.

The great hindrance to a general acceptance of the Bible is owing to two facts: Christian people claim too much for it, and the skeptics too little. Neither understands it, nor presents it to the minds of the people in its true light. It was written for an entirely different purpose from that which has been explained to the people since the days of the Apostles.

The people of the world are only half educated. They are only half born, and have only half lived for two thousand years. They have lived and been educated only in the physical, never dreaming that underneath the physical sciences of this world lies a deeper and grander science, of which they are as ignorant as were the masses of humanity of physical science during the thousand years of midnight darkness commencing with Constantine.

There is a psychic science as well as a physical science of life. The Bible does not pretend to treat of physical sciences, but it does treat of the psychic science of life, and when we understand its spiritual teaching we will learn to appreciate and love it. The advocates of the Bible have endeavored for two thousand years to enforce a belief in their interpretation of it which stultified the dictates of common sense; hence, infidelity has been rife among the people for all that time,

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which nothing, even imprisonment, fagot, and flame, could suppress.

Jesus was the expression of the Divine Will, and in tracing that Will we go back to the cradle of our civilization and learning among the Chaldeans. The word Chaldea was first applied as a title to learned men congregated in and about Ninevah. They studiously applied themselves to the development of the truths of nature among the people, the science of civil government and society. They were great astronomers, astrologists, and mathematicians. They calculated the length of the sidereal year and reckoned it to embrace three hundred and sixty-five days and six hours, while the true time, as now understood, is only nine minutes and ten seconds longer than the Chaldean time.

They mapped out the twelve constellations of the stars known as the signs of the Zodiac, and named them according to their apparent or supposed influence on the lives of men, on their physical and intellectual endowments, and on vegetation and climatic conditions. Thus the cluster of stars through which the sun seemed to pass in spring was called Aries, or the Ram. Leo, the Lion, was considered symbolical of the strong rays of the midsummer sun; Scorpio, the Scorpion, of the unhealthy autumn, and so on.

The investigation of the influences of these signs gave rise to the science of Astrology, the

true import of which is lost to us, and hence we call it pseudo-science, or false conceptions of the ancients concerning the influence of the stars on our earth, which might, after all, be of greater concern than we at present imagine. They had a true conception of the solar and lunar eclipses. Callisthenes, a Grecian scholar, who accompanied Alexander in one of his expeditions into the valley of the Euphrates, sent from Babylon a series of astronomical tables found at Babylon that date back two thousand and thirty-four years before the birth of Christ and over four hundred years before the birth of Abraham. From those tables and their cuneiform records it is ascertained that they have the regular eclipses of the moon accurately placed at 18 years and 11 days, 223 lunar months, at the expiration of which time the moon again enters upon its former path in the heavens, in consequence of which the same eclipses are repeated. They computed the synodic and periodic months so accurately that modern astronomers find a variance of only five seconds of time. They divided the Zodiac into twelve signs and each of these signs into thirty degrees. They also divided the years into twelve months, each month into thirty days, days into hours, and hours into minutes.

So far as history informs us, the Chaldeans established the first monarchical form of government. They left behind them the decimal and duodecimal systems of notation. They also

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understood the sciences of architecture and hydraulics to a degree that made the valley of the Euphrates bloom as a rose. Learning became so general among the people that in time the whole nation was called Chaldean.

The Chaldean religion was a mixture of Spiritualism (for they believed in a future life of spirit existence and the communication of spirits with mankind), Polytheism, and Sabianism. They deified their great men after death and worshipped them as gods, of which there were many. They believed that their gods presided over the elements of nature.

Berosus, a priest of the temple of Belus, wrote a history of Chaldea 276 years before Christ, and in that history he gave a description of the flood, which in all probability he obtained from the cuneiform writings of that people. In his description he says, "The god Bel appeared to Xisuthrus in a dream and warned him that on the fifteenth day of the month Daesius mankind would be destroyed by a deluge. He bade him bury in Sippara, the city of the sun, the extant writings, first and last, and build a ship and enter therein with his family and his close friends and furnish it with meat and drink, and place on board winged fowl and four-footed beasts of the earth, and when all was ready, set sail. Xisuthrus asked whither he was to sail, and was told, 'To the gods, with a prayer that it might fare well with mankind.'

“Then Xisuthrus was not disobedient to the vision, but built a ship fifteen stadia (3125 feet) in length and six stadia (1250 feet) in breadth, and collected all that had been commanded him, and put his wife and children and close friends on board. The flood came, and as soon as it ceased Xisuthrus let loose some birds which, finding neither food nor a place where they could rest, came back to the ark. After some days he again sent out the birds, which again returned to the ark, but with feet covered with mud. Sent out the third time, the birds returned no more, and Xisuthrus knew that land had reappeared; so he removed some of the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the vessel had grounded on a mountain. Then Xisuthrus went forth with his wife and his daughter and his pilot, and fell down and worshipped the earth and built an altar and offered sacrifice to the gods, after which he disappeared from sight, together with those who had accompanied him.

“They who had remained in the ark and not gone forth with Xisuthrus now left it and searched for him and shouted out his name, but Xisuthrus was not seen any more, only his voice answered them out of the air, saying, ‘Worship the gods, for because I worshipped them am I gone to dwell with the gods, and they who were with me have shared the same honor.’ And he bade them return to Babylon and recover the writings buried at Sippara and make them known

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men, and he told him that the land in which they then were was Armenia. So they, when they had heard all, sacrificed to the gods and went their way on foot to Babylon, and having reached it, recovered the buried writings from Sippara and built many cities and temples and restored Babylon. Some portion of the ark still remains in Armenia, in the Gordaeen (Kurdish) mountains; and persons scrape off the bitumen from it to bring away and this day use as a remedy to avert misfortunes."

George Smith, in the year 1875, obtained some clay tablets from ruins in Assyria which, when joined to other fragments in the British Museum at London, gave the Assyrian history of the world from the creation down to some time after the fall of man. In the history of the flood there are many striking resemblances to the Chaldean account as given by Berosus. Let it be remembered that the burnt clay books, or cuneiform records burned in wedge-shaped bricks, of Chaldea antedate all other known records or writings, except that perhaps they may be coeval with the rolls of papyrus found in Egyptian tombs and the inscriptions on Egyptian monuments. All of those writings were prior to the Mosaic account of the creation and the fall of man. According to the Biblical account, tongues were confounded at the tower of Babel in the year 2244 B. C., and Moses came on the stage of action 1531 B. C., over seven hundred

years after the confusion of the tongues. Let it also be remembered that Babylon came up as a city long after Ninevah, the capital of the Chaldean government, had grown into beauty and greatness. The different narratives of the flood as recounted by nations of the low-lands are so similar that it is evident that some of them were borrowed from older traditions.

The Assyrian account of the flood is here given.

El, or Il, is the root of the well-known Biblical Elohim, the God. Bab-Il, Babylon, was the gate of God. El became angered at the wickedness of the world and he sent a great flood and destroyed the whole human race, save Sisit, who was thus commanded: "When the flood comes which I shall send, thou shalt enter the ship, and into the midst of it thou shalt bring thy corn, thy goods, thy gods, thy gold and silver, thy slaves, male and female, the sons of thy army, the wild and tame animals, and all that thou hearest thou shalt do."

And Sisit gathered together all his possessions of silver and gold, all that he had of the seeds of life, and caused all his slaves, male and female, to go into the ship. The wild and tame beasts of the field also he caused to enter, and all the sons of the army; and Shamas, the sun-god, made a flood and said, "I will cause rain to fall heavily from heaven; go into the ship and shut the door."

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Come with fear, Sisit entered the ship, and in the morning of the day fixed by Shamas the storm began to blow from the ends of heaven, and Vul thundered into the midst of heaven, and Nebe came forth, and over the mountains and plains came the gods, and Nurgal the Destroyer overthrew, and Nin came forth and dashed down; the gods made ruin; in their brightness they swept over the earth. The storm went over the nations, the flood of Vul reached up to heaven; brother did not see brother; the lightsome earth became a desert, and the flood destroyed all living things from the face of the earth. Even the gods were afraid of the storm and sought refuge in the heaven of Ana, like hounds drawing in their tails.

The gods seated themselves on the thrones, and Ishtar, the great goddess, spake: "The world has turned to sin, and therefore I have proclaimed destruction. I have begotten men and now they fill the sea like children of fishes." And the gods upon their seats wept with her.

On the seventh day the storm abated, which had destroyed like an earthquake, and the sea began to dry. Sisit perceived the movement of the sea. Like reeds floated the corpses of the evil-doers and all who had turned to sin. Then Sisit opened the window and the light fell upon his face, and the ship was stayed upon mount Nizir and could not pass over it. Then on the seventh day Sisit sent forth a dove, but she

found no place to rest and she returned. Then he sent a swallow, which also returned, and again a raven, which saw the corpses in the water and ate them and returned no more.

Then Sisit released the beasts to the four winds of heaven and poured a libation and built an altar on the top of the mountain and cut seven herbs, and the sweet savor of the sacrifice caused the gods to assemble, and Sisit prayed that Bel might not come to the altar. For Bel had made the storm and sunk the people in the deep and wished in his anger to destroy the ship and allow no man to escape.

Nin opened his mouth and spoke to the warrior Bel: "Who would be left?" And Hea spoke to him: "Captain of the gods, instead of the storm let lions and leopards increase and diminish mankind; let famine and pestilence desolate the land and destroy mankind." When the sentence of the gods was passed, Bel came into the midst of the ship and took Sisit by the hand and conducted him forth, and caused his wife to be brought to his side; and he purified the earth and made a covenant; and Sisit and his wife and his people were carried away like gods, and Sisit dwelt in a distant land at the mouth of the rivers.

The account of the deluge as given by Moses is a record of the same story as given by Berosus and as found inscribed on the Assyrian tablets. The story of the tower of Babel, as given by

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is very much like that given by Moses. Chaldean tradition is this: "The earth was still of one language when the primitive men, who were proud of their strength and stature and despised the gods as their inferiors, erected a tower of vast height, in order that they might mount to heaven. And the tower was now near to heaven, when the gods caused the wind to blow and overturn the structure upon the men, and made them speak with divers tongues, whereupon the city was called Babylon."

Some of the gods were the same also. For instance, El, or Il, their chief god, is the root of Elohim, one of the Biblical gods. El was the god of heaven, the prince of the gods, and had the protective care of the Babylonian temple. Nimrod was deified after his death and was named Bel-Nimrod. The gods of the Chaldeans were classified; so were the gods of the Hebrews, for when Melchizedek went out to meet Abraham on his return from the defeat of the five kings, he was known as "priest of the most high God."

El, or Il, or Ra, was the most high God of the Chaldean pantheon, after which the gods were divided into groups or triads. Below these triads were many inferior gods, who were under the supervision of their superiors. Among the gods was a group of five representing the five planets then known,—Nin or Ninip (Saturn), Merodach (Jupiter), Nergal (Mars), Ishtar (Venus), Nebo (Mercury). After the principal

deities were numerous divinities of the second and third orders.

It is not necessary to enumerate the different gods and divinities of the Chaldeans. It is our purpose only to show the connection of the traditions, beliefs, and religion of that people with that of the Hebrews, and if the analogy proves that the Jewish religion is to some extent a derivative religion, it makes it neither any better nor any worse. The time is past when we can strangle facts for a purpose. We can now afford to tell the truth even in religion, and the truth, properly presented, raises the mission, life, and character of Jesus the Christ to a more Divine and exalted sphere than he has heretofore occupied, and the millions who now scoff at the name will be brought to the adoration of this man as the expression of a Divine Will. We must not ignore the fact that we are creatures of a superior intelligence and subordinate to a power that wills and rules, and to which man succumbs. That man or that community of men, even of nations, which violates the laws of God, or, if you so please to call them, the laws of nature, for the name makes no difference, will be punished to the extent of the violation; and that man or community will suffer and that nation go into decadence, as illustrated by innumerable examples.

Do not misunderstand these assertions. Do not infer therefrom that God punishes you, or the

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ty, or the nation. God punishes no one, on the contrary, the laws of God are self-assertive, and if man violates one of His laws the law itself inflicts the punishment, and not God. Thus, thrust your hand into the fire; by so doing you violate a law of God, and you are burned. Expose yourself to the inclement weather, and the result is pain, punishment, and oftentimes sickness and death. God does not cause the infliction, but you have violated one of the laws of your being and inflictions follow. The same rule applies to the moral, intellectual, and spiritual nature of man. Abuse your brain by dissipation, neglect of culture, or in any other way, and you will be shut out from that intellectual exhilaration that enriches the soul. Debauch your moral nature, and you walk the earth with the evidences of your degradation so plainly written that the dullest observer can read your character. Violate the laws of your spiritual nature, and your life is a corrupted soul in this sphere of existence, and in the next a pitiable shadow wandering in the gloom of its own shroud of darkness. All of these inflictions are of your own choosing; you have violated law, and the law punishes.

Now the laws of man are different from the laws of God. You may violate every law on the statute books and they lie quiescent under your revelry until the officers of justice find you out and bring punishment on you according to

the terms of the statute. If you are not found out, you can go on for a lifetime with no statutory punishment inflicted; but you can neither hide nor evade an infraction of a law of nature, for the law is its own avenger and rewarder of man's conduct. Therefore eliminate from your mind, in studying the genius and life of Jesus, that God in His anger punishes any man or set of men, any community or nation. Yet they are all punished according to their deeds.

The belief that God punishes and rewards in this sphere of life has grown out of the change in the meaning of words and terms. The word god is now quite different in meaning from that of ancient times. Now the name of God is applied to the ruler of the universe, the all-wise Creator. In ancient times the word god meant certain apotheosized spirits of dead men; thus, Nimrod was after his death apotheosized into the rank of a god.

The ceremony of apotheosis was very imposing and was as follows: The body of the person about to be made a god was first cremated and the ashes preserved in a vase. At the entrance of the palace or temple, upon a magnificent carpet, a wax figure of the body was extended on an ivory couch spread with a cloth of gold. The high officials, clad in black, sat on the left side of the couch, and on the right, noble women dressed as mourners in plain white garments.

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After seven days' watching he was pronounced dead. Then the noble youths of the equestrian order took up the couch and bore it to the forum; it was there placed between two amphitheatres, and on either side a chorus of noble men and women chanted in mournful strains hymns in praise of the deceased. The couch was then carried through the city to the Campus Martius, in the midst of which was constructed a square pile filled with combustibles, and adorned on the outside with hangings interwoven with gold and with various images and pictures. The couch was placed in the center of the pile and around it was collected every kind of incense and fragrant herb, fruits, a juice for all nations and peoples. After this a procession of horsemen and chariots passed around the pile, with drivers dressed to represent the greatest generals and illustrious ancestors of the deceased. The head man of state then approached the catafalque with a torch in hand and set it on fire; if the deceased was a man, an eagle was let loose from the top story; if a woman, a peacock was let go and, rising in mid-air with the flames, bore to the skies the soul of the dead one. The deceased was then given the name of *divus* and also the name of some divinity.

ABRAHAM

Let us now turn to those who sowed the seed which ripened in the fruit of the Cross. First

and most prominent of these was Abram, whose name was afterwards changed to Abraham.

Abraham was a Chaldean of the city of Ur. He was a great man, with a towering intellect and grand personal endowments, well educated, and fitted for the task of starting a new religious cult. He must have been a man of pleasing address and immense personal influence, or he could not have accomplished what he did in the planting of his colony in the land of Canaan and in making it the seat of a great religion.

According to Josephus, Abraham was of the tenth generation from Noah. He was a great-great grandson of Heber, from whom the Hebrews derived their name, although often called Jews because they inhabited Judea. Berosus, the Greek historian, in speaking of Abraham, says: "In the tenth generation after the flood there was among the Chaldeans a man religious and great, and skilled in the celestial science," in other words, an astronomer and astrologer.

Concerning his character, Josephus says: "He was a person of great sagacity both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his opinions, for which reason he began to have higher notions of virtue than others and determined to renew and to change the opinions all men happened then to have concerning God; for he was the first that ventured to publish this notion, that there was but one God, the Creator of the universe; and as to other gods,

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if they contributed anything to the happiness of men, each of them afforded it only according to his appointment, not by his own power."

This opinion of his was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea, as well as from those that happened in connection with the sun and moon and all the heavenly bodies. "If," said he, "those bodies had power of their own, they would certainly take care of their own regular motions; but since they do not preserve such regularity, they make it plain that so far as they co-operate to our advantage they do it not of their own abilities but as subservient to Him that commands them, to whom we ought justly to offer our honor and thanksgiving."

This new religious opinion fired up the Chaldeans and other people of Mesopotamia against him, and they became so tumultuous that he resolved to leave the country and take his followers with him to a new land to which he had been directed by his guardian spirit, which he called God.

The experience of Abraham is the experience of all reformers. Ignorance and Superstition rise against them, as they did against Jesus, who suffered and bled on the cross for simply telling the people that there was a life beyond this, and that they could only enjoy the full fruition of that life by living an exemplary one here. His followers were numerous, reaching the proportions of an army.

Nicholas of Damascus, in the fourth book of his history, says, according to Josephus, "Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of Chaldea. But after a long time he got him up and removed from that country also with his people and went into the land then called the land of Canaan, but now the land of Judea. Now the name of Abram is even still famous in the country of Damascus, and there is shown a village named from him, *The Habitation of Abram.*"

Abraham, appreciating the fact that all people are naturally religious, that they look to a source beyond themselves for spiritual consolation, and knowing that the Chaldeans, Babylonians, and the nations about him had different conceptions of God and the unseen forces, felt that the time was propitious for starting a new religion and unifying the thoughts of the people on that subject, desiring thereby to form a permanent organization, one that would stand the test of ages. Being well versed in Chaldean and Babylonian philosophy, he concluded to make further researches into the beliefs of man and bethought himself to go to Egypt and consult with the priests and men of culture of that nation.

Josephus says: "Now after this, when a famine had invaded the land of Canaan and Abram had discovered that the Egyptians were in a flourishing condition, he was disposed to go

down to them, both to partake of the plenty they enjoyed and to become an auditor of their priests, and to know what they said concerning the gods, designing either to follow them, if they had better notions than he, or to convert them into a better way, if his own notions proved the truest."

The Bible says, "And there was famine in the land, and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there, for the famine was grievous in the land." Josephus, confirming the Bible narrative, goes on to say: "Now seeing that he was to take Sarah with him and was afraid of the Egyptians with regard to the woman, lest the king should kill him because of his wife's great beauty, he contrived this device: he pretended to be her brother and directed her in a dissembling way to pretend the same, for he said it would be for their benefit. Now as soon as he came into Egypt, it happened to Abram as he supposed it would, for the fame of his wife's beauty was greatly talked of, for which reason Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, would not be satisfied with what was reported of her, but would needs see her himself, and was preparing to enjoy her; but God put a stop to his unjust inclinations by sending upon him a distemper and a sedition against his government. And when he enquired of the priests how he might be freed from these calamities, they told him that this, his miserable condition, was derived from the wrath of God on account of his inclinations to abuse the stranger's wife. He then out of fear

asked Sarah who she was and who it was she brought with her? And when he had found out the truth, he excused himself to Abram that, supposing the woman to be his sister and not his wife, he set his affections on her as having an affinity with him by marrying her, but not as incited by lust to abuse her. He also made him a large present in money and *gave him leave to enter into conversation with the most learned among the Egyptians*; from which conversation his virtue and his reputation became more conspicuous than they had been before.

“The Egyptians were formerly addicted to different customs and despised one another’s sacred and accustomed rites and were very angry with one another on that account. Abram conferred with each of them, and confuting the reasoning they made use of, every one for his own practices, he demonstrated that such reasonings were vain and void of truth; whereupon he was admitted by them in those conferences as a very wise man, and one of great sagacity, when he discoursed on any subject he undertook, in not only understanding it but in persuading other men also to assent to him. He communicated to them arithmetic, and delivered to them the science of astronomy; for before Abram came into Egypt they were unacquainted with those parts of learning, for that science came from the Chaldeans into Egypt, and from thence to the Greeks also.”

How long Abram remained in Egypt we cannot

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tell as we are not informed by either the Bible account or by Josephus on that point ; but it must have been several years, from the fact that the learning he imparted to the Egyptians could not have been given short of that time. Four hundred and sixty-five years afterwards, Moses, an Egyptian by birth, and well informed in Egyptian learning, took what he thought was good of the religion of the Egyptians and engrafted it on the Chaldean doctrines formerly impressed on the Hebrews by the founder of their religion, Abraham.

We know that this is true from the fact that within the last half century, our knowledge of those ancient peoples has been greatly enlarged by researches in the ruins of the nations once so richly endowed with knowledge of the arts and sciences, but whose energies have been quieted, whose monuments despoiled by the ruthless hand of Time, and whose records, written on wedge-shaped brick, have slept beneath the frowns of eternal sands for over three thousand years. For much of the light thrown on those hidden treasures of ancient thought, learning, and actions we are indebted to the English historians, George Rawlinson and Philip Smith, and the renowned German Orientalists, Niebuhr and Buncker.

The Assyrian clay tablets brought to London by George Smith give a history of the world from the beginning, including an account of the creation, the fall of man, the flood, the tower of Babel

and confusion of tongues, which are so similar to the accounts given in the Bible of those supposed events, that it is not heresy to imagine that the original narratives were burnt in the brick cuneiform writings when those monuments of man's superstition were made, and that they were made so far back that the knowledge of man is lost in the bewilderments of Time.

We press these facts on the minds of our readers that they may better understand the philosophy of events which induced the Magi, or wise men, as they are called in the Bible, to follow the light, called a star, to where the young Babe lay in the lowly manger. To better understand the true teachings of Jesus, we wish to call the mind of our readers to the fact that the Egyptians believed in a future life, in spirit communion and in the very highest type of morality. The same might be said of the Chaldeans though their records on this subject are not so convincing in expression as those of later religions, it was necessary for them to personify their gods to make the idea comprehensible to the uncultured masses.

The same difficulty stands in the way of an enlightened conception of God in this generation, to some extent. The trouble is, the masses want object lessons; they cannot comprehend principles without falling in grace. They can only enthuse over a fervent imagination fed on mental pictures addressed to their senses. They cannot comprehend love as a quality of nature, nor that the mind

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drinks from the fountain of universal wisdom. They must see them in the picture of some person to feel the effects of strong emotions. This tendency of the human mind to grasp at personal objects to keep the fire of their religious zeal to the proper standard made it necessary for the founders of this great religion to write it out with a double meaning,—one for the masses and one for the initiated.

Abram believed in one individual local god to whom he looked for advice, guidance and succor. It was Abraham's god that directed him to abandon the city of Ur and go into the land of Aaran. "And the Lord said unto Abram, 'Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.' And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee, 'and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.'"

It was here that the foundation of the Jewish theocracy was laid. Abraham, during his entire life after he left Chaldea, was under the direct guidance of his controlling god. He believed and taught that God administered unto man in this life and in this world. "I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee," said the Lord unto Abram. This idea of spirit-intervention in the affairs of man was indoctrin-

nated into the minds of Isaac and Jacob and finally fastened on the Jewish people the greatest theocracy the world has ever known. In this Abraham departed from the religion of the Egyptians who believed in a future bliss and in punishment after death, but not in a Divine punishment in this life.

While Abraham put his faith in one god, his especial favorite and guardian, he was a polytheist in belief; in fact, the Jews afterwards, following the belief of other nations about them, taught the plurality of gods.

In giving his directions to his servants about selecting a wife for his son Isaac, he said, "I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell." "The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that swear unto me saying: Unto thy seed will I give this land, he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." And the servant said, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham."

After Abraham had gone out with his servants and allies, and defeated with great slaughter Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, and rescued Lot and his family and retaken the

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spoils, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the valley of Siddim, which is the king's dale. Melchizedek, king of Salem, went also and took with him bread and wine and refreshed the army of Melchizedek, was "the priest of the most high god," and he blessed Abraham and said, "Blessed be Abraham of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth. And blessed be the most high God which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand." And Abraham gave tithes unto Melchizedek, thus acknowledging him as his superior.

After he had been blessed by Melchizedek, which blessing was nothing more than conferring upon him full powers of seerage and more fully indoctrinating him into the occult secrets and learning of the Magi, Abram had familiar and almost constant intercourse with the spirit world. After this, the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision saying, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give this land to inherit it." In that conversation the spirit instructed Abram to "take an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a pigeon," for an offering. Abram "laid each piece one against the other," and "when it was dark, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces." That day the Lord made a covenant with Abram

“to thy seed have I given this land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates.”

In analyzing this offering of meat to the spirit and the covenant between Abram and his God, we must consider it in the light of the relations between them. It is a well known fact among all occultists, schooled in the science of spiritology, that earth-bound spirits have all the appetites, passions, and tendencies that controlled them while in earth life. That was a great meat-eating age, and while spirits not materialized cannot masticate food, yet they indulge in the aroma arising from such foods and drinks as they indulged in while in the earth life. Hence a man dying a drunkard seeks out susceptible agents, or sensitives, and throws an influence of drink on them; when a sensitive is indulging his appetite in drink or food, his controlling spirit indulges in the aroma, or spirit influence of the viand or drink.

The Jews and all the ancients offered up living sacrifices to their tutelary gods. In extreme cases even human sacrifices were offered up. The most striking case of this kind is that of Jephthah's daughter.

The spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, “If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's

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and I will offer it up as a burnt offering." Jephthah's arms prevailed and when he returned home his daughter, his only child, came with timbrels and with dances to meet him. This sorrowed the heart of Jephthah, but his vow to his Lord was more sacred to him than the life of his daughter. After she had gone to the mountains for two months to bewail her virginity, she returned and Jephthah fulfilled his vow and his daughter was sacrificed on the altar. Judges xi.

These sacrifices were under the Aaronic priesthood, a priesthood that concerned itself with the secular affairs of men in this life and in this world. To banish this heathenish practice, Jesus offered himself up as a final sacrifice for all men in order that the abominations of the Old Testament might be dispensed with and the new dispensation take its place.

Abraham introduced the law of circumcision among the Hebrews. It was established as a religious ceremony that every male child should be circumcised at the age of eight days, under penalty of death. While it was observed as a religious ordinance, its real use was a hygienic measure which has kept the blood of that people pure through the ages.

A most wonderful spiritual manifestation occurred to Abraham as he sat in his tent door, in the plains of Mamre, in the heat of the day. The Lord spoke to him and when he lifted up his eyes, three men as he took them to be at that time, stood

by him. He caused them to be refreshed and he comforted them with a fine meal consisting of bread, a well cooked calf-steak, butter, and milk. For his kindness the Lord informed him that Sarah, his wife, should bear him a son.

The point that I wish to impress is, that spirits on the other side of life did at that day commune with Abraham and were so firmly materialized that they actually ate, drank, and conversed with Abraham. They informed him of the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; they also went to the city, stayed all night with Lot, and directed him how to save himself and family from the pending fate of the place.

THE ZODIAC

The Christian religion is not an imaginative sophism for the building of theories to catch and hold the unsophisticated but a real structure, the foundation of which was laid in the manifestations of nature reflected through these physical sciences that reach back beyond the life of history, the most pronounced being the science of astronomy.

The Christian religion in its purity is the voice of nature modelled in part upon the signs of the zodiac; only differing in this: the Jewish religion was founded on the physical planes of life represented by the movements of the heavenly bodies as first brought to the attention of men through the Magi, a learned body of scholars of Ninevah;

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while the Christian religion reflects the spiritual side evolved from the same philosophy. The foundation of the principles of the philosophy of the spiritual side of the Christian religion was brought from the city of Ur of Chaldea by Abraham and through him sent down the channels of the Jewish religion. They culminated in the vision of John on the isle of Patmos, when the holy city of the new Jerusalem, with her twelve foundations, twelve gates, and twelve precious stones, descended out of heaven from God.

Students of astronomy ask the question, "Why is it that the twelve signs of the zodiac are represented by the figures of animals when there are no such figures found in star-clusters?" The answer is this: the changing positions of the earth in its revolution around the sun, as it passes between different clusters of stars and the sun causes it to receive different impressions; those impressions stimulate certain natures prominent in different animals, and perceptible in different people. This fact was the foundation of the science of astrology which in its nature is too refined and esoteric for general uses or for defined laws.

Nature is a great big play-ground filled with beauties and wonders that lead us right into the bosom of God if we study his Bible with adoration. This Bible is written in the language of every nation and every people. And no man can revise, alter, or modify it in its least particle. It is unsealed. Its truths are imprinted in the rocks

of ages, impressed on each sand of the sea-shore, engraved in vegetation, glorified in the rose, in the lily, and in each floweret that nods in the breeze. It has open pages on the canvas of the sky. The stars invite the erudition of man. The moaning breezes sing of it, the raging storms are paragraphs of its everlasting print. All of nature is its binding and God its embodiment. Read it for it binds the ties of love; it cements the heart in the sweet communion of friendship; it opens the soul to the induction of truth and teaches man how to save himself through himself. Then the true and tender admonitions of Jesus will be fully realized and the city of God that John saw will be appreciated. The two Bibles belong together; by the reading of the one the other is interpreted.

Nature is constructed and controlled on the principles of mathematics, which science is the structural basis of every physical thing, whether it be a sphere, evanescent gas, the mammal, or the ephemeral insect of an hour. If our knowledge were sufficient we could demonstrate every factor of nature by mathematics.

Coming back to the zodiac, let us view it as a great factor in our solar universe, and from that bring to our minds its influence in forming the religious thought of men. While we speak of religious thought, let us not forget man's peculiarities.

In the remote ages of ignorance, the shades of which are still hovering over the intellect of the

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masses to a regrettable extent, men could best be controlled through their religious convictions. Those in authority commanded and the people obeyed because they presumed that the decree came from a supercontrolling power, to disobey which was a crime, to deny which was death.

To call the same power the immutable laws of nature, which should be obeyed in order that man should obtain the greatest benefits of life, would have fallen as a dead letter and the savage natures of men would hold dominion over the mind. To control that wild and uncultured nature, the sagacious leaders saw the necessity of clothing the truths of nature in the garb of holiness. While the moulders of public opinion knew the scientific application of the rules of nature to the betterment of the race, they had this difficulty to contend with: Nature was too mild to impress men with the importance of obeying its laws. To control men it was necessary to impress on their minds the existence of something in the character of a supernatural agency and power, which knowledge worked upon their emotions, evoking the tremors of fear on the one hand and stimulating the emotions of rewards and love on the other.

There are twelve constellations of stars in the heavens, which the earth passes as it revolves around the sun. As the earth passes between those different clusters and the sun, the earth and the animal, vegetable, and climatic fruitage thereof are differently affected at different seasons of

the year. Simply to call those early minds of men to these natural facts was to make but little impression on them; therefore the powers and divisions of the star clusters were made to represent, in the thoughts of the people, something closer to home than the starry depths. So the master minds associated the number twelve with the religious ceremonies of the Jewish people. This practice commenced with Jacob calling up his twelve sons, who we have every reason to believe were but symbolisms to demonstrate a religious tenet. Then came the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve stones in the breast-plate of Aaron, and the twelve men selected by Joshua, each with a stone, who caused the water of the Jordan to assuage in order that the children of Israel might pass into the promised land. There were twelve gates to the holy city, and following the scientific order, Jesus selected twelve apostles; there were twelve manner of fruit on the tree of Paradise the leaves of which were for the healing of the nations; there were twelve stones to the twelve gates of the holy city. To the casual reader the number twelve presents no significance, but to the religio-scientific, the number is of the utmost importance.

We will divest the mysteries of the zodiac of scientific nomenclature and simplify our language so that it may be of use to the general reader. Let us consider the sun as the center of our universe and the earth as revolving around it once

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each year. Beyond the path of the earth the fixed stars are located. The earth in its revolution around the sun is continually passing a direct line reaching from the sun outward to some of those stars. The stars of our universe visible from the northern hemisphere are divided into twelve constellations or groups. For a simple illustration of those constellations, we will take the sun as the center and from it draw twelve imaginary lines outward into space. Between those lines are twelve spaces, in each of which are clusters of stars, called signs of the zodiac. The earth in its revolution actually passes between those groups of stars and the sun.

The ancient Chaldeans ascertained the location of those star-groups and that each of them threw an influence on the earth, and on the people and products of the earth as the earth passed between them and the sun. By a long and patient observation it was ascertained that the earth, in passing the respective groups was affected in different ways and all of animal and vegetable nature was accordingly influenced. They marked the influences of the different groups on mankind and on animal nature, and they associated the effects of each group with the nature of the animal that the passing of the groups by the earth aroused; then they drew a map representing the different animals thus imagined.

The names of the twelve signs of the zodiac with their beasts, are as follows:

Aries — Ram.
 Taurus — Bull.
 Gemini — Twins.
 Cancer — Crab.
 Leo — Lion.
 Virgo — Virgin.
 Libra — Balances.
 Scorpio — Scorpion.
 Sagittarius — Archer.
 Capricornus — Goat.
 Aquarius — Water-bearer.
 Pisces — Fishes.

Jacob, in blessing his sons, associated the meaning of their names with certain influences of the zodiac on mankind. All the natures of man are presumed to be associated with zodiacal influences, thrown upon the child at birth. When Jacob called his sons before him, his great mind associated the name of each with a scientific problem of nature and we would be better off did we understand them in the light in which they were held and understood by that great man.

Reuben was the first born of Jacob, the head of his family of children, and consequently the first to be called up to receive the blessing of his father. Reuben represents the first sign of the zodiac.

The signs however are not the same in position now that they were in the days of Jacob, because of the retrocession of the equinoxes (about 50

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1-10 yearly, or at the rate of 72 years to a degree, displacing an entire sign in about 2152 years, and making an entire revolution in about 25,868 years), and the result is, that since the days of Jacob the constellations have moved westward almost two signs; we have passed through Aries and are almost ready to enter the sign of Gemini. According to our calculations the earth enters the sign of Aries on the 21st of March and remains in that sign until the 19th of April. This sign is represented by the ram, one meaning of which is "head." The use of the head is to think, to reason. "Thou art my first born," said Jacob when blessing his children, "my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power." Those qualities belong to the head, but because of an indecent act of Reuben, Jacob concluded with a curse, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Although Reuben was endowed with great brain power, he did not excel, for his tribe, with that of the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh were carried off by Pul and Tiglath-Pileser, which is the last historical information we have of them.

Jacob associated Simeon and Levi, who were twins, together. That brings up the double constellations of the Bull and Twins. Astronomically the earth enters the sign of Taurus, or Bull, on the 19th of April and it takes unto the 20th of May to pass through it. The legend of the Bull is "stiff necked, firm, obstinate, bull headed."

The third sign of the zodiac is Gemini, Twins. In Grecian mythology, they are called Castor and Pollux. They were warlike in their natures, treacherous in their friendships and cruel in their behavior. Simeon and Levi were of the same type. Jacob in his charge to his sons said to and of them, "Simeon and Levi are brethren, instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel; I will divide them in Jacob and scatter them in Israel."

Let us compare the curse of Simeon and Levi with the characters attributed to Castor and Pollux, or Gemini, the constellation of the twins. They were twin brothers, sons of Jupiter and the wife of Tyndarus, king of Sparta. They were invited to the nuptials of Phoebe and Talaria, the daughters of Leucippus. Their behavior after this invitation was cruel; they became enamored of the two women whose nuptials they were to celebrate and resolved to carry them away and marry them. A battle ensued and Castor killed Lynceus, and was himself killed by Idas. Pollux revenged the death of his brother by killing Idas. Pollux desiring to be with his brother who was immortal, Jupiter permitted Castor to share his immortality with his brother, and consequently, as long as one was permitted to be on earth the other was detained in the infernal regions, and they alternately lived and died every day, or according to some, every six months. Jupiter rewarded the

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brothers by making them a constellation in heaven under the name of *Gemini*. The earth enters this sign on the 20th of May and leaves it June 21st.

Zebulun: constellation Cancer, the Crab. Jacob in his order of blessing his children did not follow the order of birth, but in this instance placed Zebulun before he did Judah; the reason probably was that in the second trinity of the seasons, June, July, and August, the lion is the center of the trinity, because it is the stronger.

The earth enters this sign June 21st and it takes until July 22nd to pass through it. This sign represents the breast of the individual, the lacteals, the maternal functions. It rules the department of home, domesticity, safety.

Says Jacob, "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for a haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon." The crab was associated by Jacob with water, the sea. According to Grecian fable, the crab was transported to heaven at the request of Juno, after it had been slain by Hercules during his battle with the serpent Python; but the evident purpose of the name is to represent the apparent motion of the sun in June, which is said to resemble the movement of the crab in its backward motions.

Judah: constellation Leo, the Lion.

The earth enters the sign of Leo July 22nd and leaves it August 22nd. In man this represents the heart forces: the love sentiment and emotions. It forces the blood through the whole

person; it gives it strength. In the signs of the zodiac it represents the heat of July and August, when the sun has attained its greatest power; it is symbolized in our almanacs by the figure of an enraged lion. Says Jacob, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise; for thy hand shall be on the necks of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up; he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." The tribe of Judah was a warlike tribe, aggressive and strong. From this tribe descended the Master.

Issachar: constellation Virgo, the virgin,—the Virgin Mother, Eve, Isis. The earth enters this sign on the 22nd of August and leaves it September 23rd. On the zodiacal diagram it is represented by a female holding a bunch of ripened fruit in her hand, the apples of Paradise, symbolizing the productive powers of nature. With this idea in his mind, Jacob said, "Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens; and he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute." There is too much similarity between the productive fruits of that season of the year, and the burdens of the body

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and the bowing down of the strong ass between two burdens, as presented by Jacob, to be a mere accident without a concurrence of meaning.

Dan: constellation *Libra*, Balances. The earth enters this sign September 23rd and leaves it October 23rd. It represents the reproductive functions of the human system; in morals, the high functions of justice with her scales weighing and balancing the relations of man unto man. "Render unto Cæsar that which is Cæsar's." The scales are emblematic of the position of the sun at this time of the year. When the sun arrives at this part of the ecliptic the days and nights are equal as if weighed in a balance: hence when the sun enters *Libra* about September 21st it is called the *autumnal* equinox. On the 25th of September was born John the Baptist and on the 25th of March, says Higgins, "Jesus came to the exaltation of his glory." This is called the *vernal* equinox. John preceded and prepared the way; Jesus came after him in his increasing glory. In speaking of the event John says, "He must increase but I must decrease," John iii. 30. Jacob in speaking of Dan says, "Dan shall judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse's heels, so that his rider shall fall backward. I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

Gad: constellation *Scorpio*, the Scorpion. The earth enters this sign October 23rd and leaves

it November 23rd. It is supposed to control the sex functions. In astrology Scorpio is fabled to have killed the great hunter Orion and for that he was placed among the constellations; for this reason also it is said that "when Scorpio rises Orion sets." Following the thought Jacob said, "A troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last."

Asher: constellation Sagittarius, Archer. The earth enters this sign about November 22nd and leaves it about December 21st. This sign relates to the thighs of the man, to the muscular organism, the motor nerves, activity of both body and mind. In mythology it represents the fabled Crotus, a son of Eumene, the nurse of the Muses. He devoted his life to the labors of the chase and after death Jupiter placed him among the constellations under the name of Sagittarius. Jacob in his blessings said of him, "His bread shall be fat and he shall produce royal dainties."

Naphtali: constellation Capricorn, the Goat. The earth enters this sign about December 23rd and leaves it about January 20th. This is the head of the winter trinity, the longest night in the year, called the winter solstice. It is the time for thoughtful meditation. In mythology it is fabled to have been Pan, who in the war of the giants was taken to heaven in the form of a goat. Some claim that this sign represents the goat of Amalthæa, which fed Jupiter with her milk. To reward her kindness she was taken to heaven and

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made a constellation. Jacob said, "Naphtali is a hind let loose, he giveth goodly words."

Joseph: constellation Aquarius, the Water-bearer. The earth enters this constellation January 20th and leaves it February 19th. Those born under this sign are strong, active, nervous, sagacious, usually good business men appreciating the worth of honor. The women are usually good housewives and useful members in domestic circles. In mythology the person symbolized was supposed to be Ganymede, the son of Tross, and a beautiful youth of Phrygia. When out hunting one day he was taken up to heaven by Jupiter where he became the cup-bearer of the gods in the place of Hebe. This sign is represented by the water-bearer as during this period there is usually a great abundance of rain. Jacob was very profuse in blessing his favorite son, Joseph. "Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall." Mark the association of the fruitful bough by the well of water, and the constellation whose sign is "water-bearer." Was the allusion of Jacob a mere accidental coincidence with the meaning of the constellation or did he have a mind on the zodiacal sign?

Benjamin, the twelfth son of Jacob, and the constellation Pisces, Fish, the twelfth sign of the zodiac. The earth enters this sign on the 19th of February and leaves it March 21st. The influence of this sign on those born during its reign

is to give them clever understanding of the affairs of life. They are active of person because the sign applies to the feet. They have a love of acquiring scientific knowledge, are good students of history, travels, and adventure. The sign is represented by two fishes tied together by their tails. The fishes were fabled by the Greeks to be those into which Venus and Cupid were changed to escape from the giant Typhon.

“Benjamin shall raven as a wolf.” This prophesy was most literally fulfilled. In the war with the children of Israel all the Benjamite women had been taken prisoners, or destroyed, so that those of the tribe of Benjamin who had saved themselves by flight, found themselves without women. They became very much concerned about the future of the tribe for the want of wives; so they were instructed by the Lord to go and lie in wait in the vineyards and when the daughters of Shiloh come out to dance to seize them,—“every man his wife of the daughters of Shiloh and go to the land of Benjamin.” Judges xxi. Jacob blesses his youngest son in very short and terse terms. “Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour his prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.”

If the blessings of Jacob upon his twelve sons were all the evidence we have to prove that the Bible was founded on nature as expressed, we might still be doubtful of the strength of our argument. But in discussing these questions, let

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us bear in mind that the Bible is a double book in which commonplace expressions are made with scientific meanings. One reading is for the untrained, the other for those initiated into its mysteries. While no man can fathom all of these mysteries, yet it does not take a scholarly intellect to trace the evidences of them from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelations.

While studying these Biblical problems let us keep in mind that the signs of the zodiac are represented by beasts and that the burden of the visions of John on the Isle of Patmos was the association of those beasts with the new Jerusalem that he saw come down from God. If the reader will keep these figurative associations well in mind, the verdict will necessarily be that our religion was born on the banks of the Euphrates and figuratively written in the zodiacal signs which are eternal in the heavens.

Following the twelve sons of Jacob, we see them expanded into twelve tribes, all united, but yet distinctive branches of the same people. We will pass by minor data and go with Moses and the children of Israel into the desert, where two years and two months after their departure from Egypt on their way to the Holy Land, the Lord commanded that this struggling people should be numbered and stationed in camps according to his directions.

A description of this wonderful camp and the numbering of the children of Israel is found in

the first and second chapters of the book of Numbers. "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron saying, Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard with the ensign of his father's house." Godfrey Higgins in the *Anacalypsis* says that the signs of the zodiac, with the exceptions of Scorpio which was exchanged by Dan for the eagle, were carried by the different tribes of the Israelites on their standards; and Taurus, Leo, Aquarius, and Scorpio or the Eagle, the four signs of Reuben, Judah, Ephraim and Dan, were placed at the four corners, the four cardinal points of their encampment, evidently in allusion to the cardinal points of the sphere, the equinoxes and solstices, when the equinox was in *Taurus*. These coincidents prove that the Israelitic system of religion had its origin before the bull ceased to be an equinoctial sign, and it proves also, that the religion of Moses was originally the same in its secret mysteries as that of the heathen.

The camp was in the form of a square. On the east side, toward the rising of the sun, the camp of Judah was pitched and on one side of Judah was the tribe of Issachar, on the other was the tribe of Zebulun. This formed the eastern trinity of the camp, corresponding with the three spring months, March, April, and May. This combination of three tribes of Israel formed the camp of Judah and on his standard was the beast sign Leo, the lion.

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On the south side was the standard of the camp of Reuben. On one side of this camp was the tribe of Simeon and on the other was the tribe of Gad, and the standard of the camp of Reuben was Taurus, the bull.

On the west side was the standard of the camp of Ephraim. On one side of Ephraim was the tribe of Manasseh and on the other side was the tribe of Benjamin. This formed the camp of Ephraim, the standard of which was Aquarius, the Water-bearer.

On the north side of the camp was the standard of the camp of Dan, Libra, the scales. On one side of the tribe of Dan was the tribe of Asher and on the other side was that of Naphtali.

This encampment was placed in a hollow square on the inside of which was the tabernacle of the congregation, guarded and taken care of by the tribe of Levi, which was stationed round about it.

THE BEASTS THAT EZEKIEL SAW

Let us now consider the prophesy of Ezekiel made on the river Chebar, while he was a captive with the children of Israel in the land of the Chaldeans, and mark the similarity with the vision of Daniel and with that of John on the island of Patmos; and then let us ask ourselves if the same inspiration did not actuate all three of these great prophets and if the basis of all of them was not the beasts of the zodiac?

Says Ezekiel, "It came to pass as I was among

the captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel, the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans. And I looked, and behold a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud; also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures, and this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man, and every one had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet; and the soles of their feet were like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like color of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; then they had four their faces and their wings. Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they went; they went every one straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side; and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. Ezekiel i. 3-10.

John says of his vision, "After this I looked, and behold a door was open in heaven; and behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a

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man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle." Rev. iv. 1-7.

The beast on the standard of Judah was the lion, that on the standard of Reuben was the bull, which looked like a calf to John. On the standard of Ephraim was the Water-bearer, a man, and on the standard of Dan was Libra. (Perhaps as Dan changed the Scorpion to the standard of the Eagle, that standard ought to be placed instead of the Scales in the sign.) However, with that one exception all three of the beasts are the same as the beasts of the zodiac and as those of Ezekiel. Again, the city that John saw came out of the heaven of God. It was four-square "and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel." The gates you will observe were in the same order in the camp described in Numbers 1 and 2. On the east three gates, on the south three gates, on the west three gates, and on the north three gates.

To show further that the vision of John related to the earlier prophecies and beliefs of the ancient Jews let us compare again John and Ezekiel. Ezekiel was in the land of Chaldea and was prophesying from there about seven hundred years before the visions of John on the isle of Patmos. Ezekiel says, "And when I looked, behold, a hand was sent unto me, and lo, a roll of

a book was therein; and he spread it before me; and it was written within, and without; and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe. Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak to the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then did I eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak of my words unto them. Ezek. ii. 9, 10; iii. 1-5.

We understand of course, that the prophet was instructed to study the law, and when he became learned to go to the children of Israel and prophesy unto them. Now let us turn to John.

“And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel’s hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. Rev. x. 8-11.

SACRED NUMBERS

“The frequent occurrence of certain numbers in the sacred literature of the Hebrews,” says William Smith in his Dictionary of the Bible, “is obvious to the most superficial reader, and it is almost equally obvious that these numbers are associated with certain ideas.”

It is a great pity that man has lost the earliest meaning of those numerical symbols, for they all have a significance, and among the learned of the ancients they represented principles of nature so closely associated with the nature of man, that they became interwoven with their religious teachings. The symbolical meanings were known only by those educated in the science of spiritology; hence their meanings are never explained from latter-day pulpits.

Prominent among those symbolic signs are the numbers 1, 2, 3, 7, 12, 40, 70, 144, 144,000. All refer back to the principles of the mathematics of nature, which if properly understood would unravel the mysteries of life. The only cause of unhappiness among men is the disorder of the spiritual man. Our bodies may become disordered and give us pain, but that does not necessarily bring unhappiness.

ONE

The number one and its multiples comprehend all of numerical nature. Correspondingly there

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is ONE GOD, the comprehension of all nature. One is divided up into fractions, but yet the one is always an integral. The essence, power, beauty, and gradeur of God are manifest in every individual thing in nature and all partake of him, yet GOD IS ONE. The intelligent mind can elaborate for itself the principles only hinted at here.

TWO

Two is the first association of numbers. Everything that has being is of a dual nature. There are two opposing forces in everything, a positive and a negative. It is by the power of those forces that the heavenly bodies are held in their proper places as they revolve in space around their central magnets. These opposing forces of diverse natures are so nicely adjusted that no two atoms really ever touch each other, but around each is a minute atmospheric wall. This dual nature is represented in the male and female natures of all animal life. Animal perpetuation could not be continued were it not for the male and female elements in nature. The Master started out his disciples in pairs, for "in union there is strength."

THREE

The number three is a symbolic sign found in the doctrine of the Trinity which has always been a knotty question among theologians. It was the question that divided the Arian and the Alexandrian sect of Christians in an early day and

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which induced Constantine to convene the council of Nice in the year 324.

The plain wording of the Bible does not teach the doctrine as presented by theologians. The only passages that can be called to its support are these: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations; baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." That passage in I. John v. 7, which reads, "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," is conceded to be spurious and is omitted in the Revised Version of the New Testament.

These spurious passages in the Bible mar the effect of the whole, yet we cannot dispense with it because of those frauds any more than we can dispense with the use of gold as a medium of exchange because there are counterfeit coins in circulation. We must distinguish the true from the false in the Bible on the same principle that we do in other things, exercising our best judgment. In the above quotation, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost were not presented as three persons in one, but as the proper wording of ceremonies which were recommended, and nothing more.

Scientifically, they are three principles of nature in one, the Infinite Mind that compre-

hends everything and forms everything by general rules or laws of nature, the physical substance of all things, and the spirit of all things. Those are the three component elements in every man, and in every living thing, as well as in God. It is a fact which all must admit that man is a trinity within and of himself. If we rightly understand the Trinity, we can readily comprehend the divine nature of the Master. Matter is an eternal factor of nature. It never had a beginning and can never have an ending. There is in nature a universal spirit and a universal mind, or intelligence. Mind is the great combining power of nature. The universal mind, or the mind of God, compounded the universe, made the world. The Master was a child of prophesy; he came for a purpose, and was first originated by the Divine Will. Mary was chosen as his mother and the spirit of Intelligence permeated her being, subdued her mind to spiritual thoughts, and conquered the flesh by the power of the spirit. She conceived in that state of mind and brought forth a child of exceptional beauty, grace, intelligence, and spiritual endowments. He was an especial child of God, that is, he was cultured by Divine thought for an especial purpose. He came; the purpose was fulfilled.

A knowledge of the Trinity is of great importance to man. Rightly understood the race will evolve to a higher, grander, and better condition.

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Let us analyze the three persons in one as applied to man. All men have a physical nature. Our first duty is to properly care for the physical man, which is the house in which the real, the spiritual man, lives. The spiritual man cannot live with comfort in a diseased, deformed, or debauched house. It is, then, our duty to study to improve the nature of physical man.

In the culture of the physical we should not neglect the spiritual man, for that lives forever and goes into the next world when it leaves this, either to reap the rewards of a well spent life, or the reverse, according to the seed it has sown.

To be a person of purpose or worth, the intellect must be cultivated; there is no deformity so great as that of the mind, for mind marks the measure of man. This does not mean that one should master the sciences in the books, but it does mean that one should learn how to think and to think well on all subjects within the life of the individual. If you are a farmer, be an intelligent farmer; if you are a mechanic, understand your trade; if you are a housewife, preside with dignity and grace over your family; in short, whatever be your calling, be the master of that calling, but imbue it with spiritual thought.

The object of most people of this age is to accumulate all the physical comforts of life to the neglect of other needs. This is a great mistake; while the comforts of the physical are necessary, it is yet far better to be stinted in worldly

goods than to have the spirit starved and the intellect dwarfed, for you cannot take your earthly possessions with you, and you do go with your spiritual wealth and mental endowments. If they have been neglected it may take thousands of years in which to right the wrongs of a few years of earth life. You live for yourself. We make our own spiritual conditions, no one else can do it for us, therefore we should study well the trinity of man and care for the whole person.

In the very beginning of the Bible narratives concerning man the doctrine of the Trinity is laid down, but it is done in an allegorical manner that has caused it to be overlooked; so for thousands of years the account of the creation of man has been a stumbling block to the skeptic and unexplainable to the theologian. Yet the truth of man's creation, or rather combination, as given in Genesis is absolutely true and scientific.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." Mark the language; the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground; he did not create man, but formed him. Scientifically speaking that was true. Physical man is composed of seventeen elements of the earth. He is a chemical compound so far as his physical is concerned, and that compound comes from the earth. It makes up the physical man which God formed. But that formation did not make the whole man; there were other elements wanting. He was a lifeless lump of clay or dust, and would

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have always remained so had not something else occurred. One thing lacking was life. God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. So far we have the physical body endowed with life; but he was not yet a man, he had only two elements of a man. When the breath of life was breathed into his nostrils "man became a living soul." First the physical man, then the life principle, and then the everlasting soul. This Bible narrative is terse and beautiful. The writers of the Bible simply stated facts, often hiding their real meaning, which was left to those schooled in figurative speech to interpret.

FOUR

This number finds expression in "the four corners of the earth"; "four winds," Dan. vii. 2; "four beasts with wings" and "four faces," Ezek. i. 5; "four rivers of Paradise," Gen. ii. 10; "four beasts," Rev. iv. 6; "foursquare," Ezek. xl. 47.

SEVEN

Seven is also a sacred number, a building number, and when understood we may see its sacred application.

In nature there are certain clusters of numbers in the building process; for instance, there are seven days in the week, seven stars in the Pleiades, seven sounds or tones in an octave of music, seven ages of man, seven senses,—five physical senses, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting,

and feeling, and two spiritual senses, Intuition and Psychomancy,—and seven colors to the rainbow.

Those prismatic colors are of great importance; they are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red. Below the red is black, above the violet is white. Now man emits from his aura the degree or color in which he lives and which controls his nature. For instance, green is the medial color; that is the medium station of man. When he sinks below this medial line he is on the downward road to ruin, when he rises above it he is in the order of progression. When he sinks below the red and enters into the realm of black he is lost in this world and in the next. He is beyond redemption. When he evolves to the station of white he becomes perfect, but he can only reach that state in the after life. All of this will be fully explained as we continue with our work.

In the degrees of the Magi, the Order of Melchizedek, there are associations of the numbers three, five, seven, ten, and twelve. Among the Jews seven is the number of perfection; they let their lands rest every seventh year. There were seven churches, seven vials of wrath, seven heavens, and many more instances in which the number is used in the building of both the Jewish and Christian religions.

Clark in his Commentaries says, "The number seven, which was a sacred number among the

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Hebrews, was conveyed by them down to the Greeks by means of the Egyptian philosophy, from which they borrowed most of their mysteries; and it is most likely that the opinion which the Greeks had was that there was some mystical idea attached to it. It is evident from its being made the number of perfection among the Hebrews. Philo and Josephus say that the Essenes, an ancient sect of the Jews, held it sacred, because it results from the sides of a square added to those of a triangle. But what meaning does that convey? A triangle, or triad, according to the Pythagoreans, who borrowed their system from the Egyptians, who borrowed from the Jews, was the emblem of wisdom, as consisting of beginning (Monad), middle (Dua), and end (Triad). So wisdom consists of three parts, expression of the past, attention to the present, and judgment of the future.

“It is also the most penetrating of all forms, being the shape of a wedge, and indestructibility is essential to it, as a triangle can never be destroyed. From these three properties it was the emblem of spirit. The square, solid, and tetrad, by the same system were interchangeable signs. Now a square is the representation of a solid, or matter, and the number seven contains within itself the properties of both the triangle and solid and the square or tetrad; that is the emblem of body and spirit and comprehends both the intellectual and natural world, which embraces

the idea of God, the chief of spirits or essences, and all nature."

The number 7, as denoting either plurality or completeness, is found in a considerable number of Biblical passages. "If Cain shall be avenged seven fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold." Gen. iv. 24. "Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins." Lev. xxvi. 24. "The words of the Lord are pure words; as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." Psalms xii. 6. "The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies; thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven days before them; and shall be removed from all the kingdoms of the earth." Deut. xxviii. 25.

TEN

Ten is the perfect number, nine integers and one cipher. It is the rounding out of all smaller numbers and the opening up of all numerical mathematics.

Ten is a preferential number,—10 commandments, the law of tithes, 70 as compounded of ten seven times seventy fold. "Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but until seventy times seven." Gen. iv. 24. "The weight whereof was a hundred and thirty shekels, one silver bowl of seventy shekels." Num. vii. 13-19. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom

thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee." Num. xi. 16.

And in this connection Christ sent forth his seventy disciples. In making one of the translations of the Bible it is said that seventy elders were placed in separate rooms, and were kept there seventy days, each making a copy of the Bible; and when they came out they all agreed. "These nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years." Jer. xxv. 11.

TWELVE

That the Bible was originally founded on scientific principles, brought from the Chaldeans by Abraham and transmitted through his successors to the time of Jesus, is proved by the number twelve, which runs through the Bible from Genesis to Revelations. The application of the secret meaning of the number twelve was founded on the sciences of astronomy and mineralogy.

There are twelve signs of the Zodiac, discovered by the Chaldeans long before the birth of Abraham. To those signs of the Zodiac the Chaldeans attached the science of astrology which was more fully noticed under the head of "The Zodiac." The characters of the twelve sons of Jacob, as given by him in his blessing of them, related to the influence the twelve signs of the Zodiac manifested on people born under them.

There were twelve stones in the breast-plate of Aaron which had their secret meanings. There were twelve tribes of Israel, twelve apostles, twelve manner of fruits on the trees whose leaves were for the healing of the nations, twelve stones that the priests carried on their shoulders to cause the waters of the Jordan to lessen that the children of Israel might pass over the river in safety, twelve stars, twelve gates to the Holy City, and twelve stones for the foundations.

The Holy City that John saw coming down from heaven was typical of the order that had been the binding tie of fellowship from time immemorial among the Israelites.

The twelve gates of the city represented the twelve degrees of the order, we have the right to suppose, of Melchizedek. The stones of the foundations represented the principles taught in each degree; those twelve stones represented twelve virtues corresponding to the twelve months of the year.

January, the first month of the year, corresponds with the first degree of the order; the stone is the Jasper, the meaning of which is Friendship, Fidelity. That is a beautiful motto. Friendship is the basis of all our social relations, while Fidelity is a virtue of inestimable worth.

February is represented by the Sapphire which signifies Light,—light of knowledge, light of understanding, Jesus, the light of the world.

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March is represented by the Chalcedony. The Chalcedony signifies Intelligence. Those entering this degree must exercise their minds, must know how to think, for no person can achieve much in this world who does not use his intellect and act with an intelligent understanding.

April is represented by the Emerald, which means Wisdom. We must cultivate the gift of wisdom if we wish to achieve success in this life. "For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom, and knowledge and joy; but to the sinner he giveth travail to gather and to heap up." Eccl. ii. 26. "Wisdom is better than rubies." Prov. viii. 11.

May is represented by the Sardonyx, which means Knowledge. "The wise layeth up knowledge; but the mouth of the fool is near destruction." Prov. x. 14. "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish; whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's web." Job viii. 13, 14. "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust men perisheth." Prov. xi. 7.

June is represented by the Sardius, the meaning of which is Faith. It is the head of that beautiful Trinity of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Have faith in God, faith in yourself, and faith in the mission of life. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Heb. xi. 1.

July is represented by the Chrysolite, signifying Hope. Without hope a man would be as a ship in mid-ocean without a rudder. "For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope." Rom. viii. 24. "The hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish." Prov. x. 28. "When a wicked man dieth his expectation shall perish, and the hope of unjust men perisheth." Prov. xi. 7.

August is represented by the Beryl, whose meaning is Charity. "With malice toward none but with charity for all we will finish the work we have begun." Lincoln. "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, but the greatest of these is charity." I. Cor. xiii. 13. "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity." II. Peter i. 5-7.

September is represented by the Topaz, which signifies Purity. "The pure in heart shall see God." "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully; he shall receive the blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation." Psalms xxiv. 4. "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things that are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever

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things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. iv. 8. "To the pure all things are pure." Titus i. 15. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep thyself unspotted from the world." James i. 27.

October is represented by the Chrysopraxe, the meaning of which is Health. This is a very important degree and subject to think upon. There is nothing of greater concern than health. The term applies not only to the physical man, but to the mental man and to the spiritual man,—it comprehends the whole man. No one can be absolutely happy or useful who has not a healthy body. A sickly body impairs the whole man to some extent. As there are diseases of the body there are also diseases of the spirit which are far more to be dreaded than mere physical sickness. When a man passes to the next stage of existence all his bodily ailments are left behind, but he takes his spiritual ailments with him, for the spirit is the man. The ailments of the spirit are such things as crime, debauchery, drunkenness, and all kinds of defilement. All such are spiritual diseases and in some instances they are so great and dark that they sink the soul into outer darkness and finally into annihilation. "O Lord heal my soul." Psalms xli. 4. "Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more.

The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint."

November is represented by the Jacinth, which stands for Culture or Training. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Prov. xxii. 6. Were it not for our culture and training the race would relapse into the condition of savagery. Our tendency is backward to our early conditions and it is only constant culture and training that keeps the race in the path of progress. Every child comes into the world in absolute ignorance and if there were no one to train him, the race would gradually return to cave-dwelling and vie with the beasts for mastery.

December is represented by the Amethyst, which signifies Perfection. When one reaches the twelfth degree he is presumed to be perfect. That of course is impossible, for there is none perfect save God, who is perfection in all things. That condition is not expected of any man, but there are conditions in human conduct that we call perfection. For instance, a student is said to be perfect in his studies who reaches 100. We can be exemplary in our conduct, our thoughts and in the sphere in which we live; then we are in human perfection. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Ps. xxxvii. 37. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment; he that feareth is not made

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perfect in love." I. John iv. 18. "And above all things put on charity which is the bond of perfection." Col. iii. 14.

Before the invention of figures by the Arabs in the tenth century letters of the alphabet were used for numbers. In that system each letter had its numerical value, the true estimate of which is now, in a measure, lost to us. The Greeks, in the time of Homer or soon thereafter, are thought by some to have assigned to their letters a numerical value corresponding to their order in the alphabet, and it may be presumed that the same system was followed by the Jews and ancient Christians. According to that system, men were classed in numerical values according to their moral standing or religious value to the church.

The heathen gods were classed as beasts and they had their numerical values as well as men. John says in Revelations (xiii. 18): "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred, three score and ten." What that number represents no one knows, but some suppose it had reference to the Latin nation, and that the designation of beasts by John referred to different nations; but the better judgment is that it was a spiritual appellation valuing men according to their faith in the religion of Jesus, in contradistinction to the heathen worship of beasts, the heavenly bodies, and sentient gods.

Pythagoras placed numbers on a more scientific basis; he maintained that nature was builded on numbers, in fact, "the being of God could be proved by mathematics." Chemistry, the science of all sciences, proves that every combination in nature is founded on atomic numbers; that the different things we see and appreciate about us are all builded on numbers. For instance, all woody fibers of plants, trees, and grasses are composed of three gases — oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon, with a slight tracing of nitrogen. Take these elements and arrange the atoms differently and we have compounds of a different nature. As an example, take the same elements in the proportion of twelve parts of carbon, eleven parts of nitrogen, and eleven parts of oxygen, and we have cane sugar. Take twelve parts of carbon, fourteen parts each of hydrogen and oxygen, and we have grape sugar. Take six parts of carbon, seven of hydrogen, and six of oxygen, and manna sugar is the result.

THE MAGI

In turning backward to the dawn of our present civilization, when the religions of the world that have stood the tests of time were in process of formation, we look with much favor upon the cult known as the Magi, or Wise Men of the East. It was they who sowed the seeds of Divine wisdom along the Euphrates, the valley of the

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Tigris, the Persian gulf, and perhaps Egypt, whence it spread into other countries.

From the time of the degeneracy of man and the introduction of sin into the world, through prophesies then made, a Redeemer, to come at some time, was looked for. These prophesies were not confined to Biblical prophets alone, but the Magi had them as well; in evidence of that fact we need but call attention to the conduct of the wise men who were guided by a star from "the East" to Jerusalem at the time of the birth of the Savior. According to the best authorities, those men came from about the Persian gulf, or the valley of the Euphrates. It was a long journey from there to Bethlehem, and they must have started on their journey some time before the actual birth of the child Jesus. However, it is evident that they were informed of the approaching event in advance from the fact that they came laden with rich presents of gold, frankincense, and myrrh for the new-born king of the Jews.

In the Hebrew text of the Old Testament the word Magi occurs but twice, and then only incidentally, Jer. xxxix. 3 and 13. In those instances it is under the name of "Rab-mag," which, being interpreted, is "Magi."

These Magi were skilled scientists, so far as the sciences were developed at that time. They understood astronomy, and astrology so far as it was useful. They were psychics, and communed

with the gods and received information from the Source of spiritual knowledge, as did the prophets of the Bible and later the Apostles. They held the esteem of the heads of the government of the Achaian kings. Even Cyrus the Great always had one of the Magian priests with him.

William Smith, in his Dictionary of the Bible, says: "Historically the Magi are conspicuous chiefly as a Persian religious cast. Herodotus connects them with another people by reckoning them among the sixth tribe of the Medes, (1,101). They appear in his history of Astyages as interpreters of dreams, (1,120). But as they appear in Jeremiah among the retinue of the Chaldean king, we must suppose Nebuchadnezzar's conquests led him to gather around him the wise men and religious teachers of the nations which he subdued, and that thus the sacred tribe of the Medes rose under his rule to favor and power. The Magi took their places among 'the astrologers and star-gazers and monthly prognosticators.' It is with such men that we have to think of Daniel and his fellow exiles as associated."

It is evident that Daniel and the Magi possessed the same occult powers and belonged to the same class of spiritual scientists, for Daniel was made chief of the Order. When Belshazzar was in a drunken revelry, with his princes, their wives, and his wives and concubines, there came forth the fingers of a man's hand and wrote over against

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the candlesticks upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. He cried aloud for the Chaldean soothsayers and astrologers to interpret the writing, but could find none. But he was told "not to let thy countenance be changed, there is a man in the kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father light and understanding and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him, whom the king, Nebuchadnezzar, thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans and soothsayers." Dan. v. 5, 11.

The above passage explains in part the meaning of the Holy Ghost as used in the New Testament. In Daniel it was called the spirit of the holy gods. Josephus says: "When Belshazzar heard this, he called for Daniel, and had discourse with him what he had learned concerning him and his wisdom and how a *Divine* spirit was with him, and that he alone was capable of finding out what others would never have thought of." Daniel was endowed with the power of the holy spirit while he was a prisoner under the Babylonian king, for he was but a child when he was captured and taken to Babylon a prisoner. The office under Belshazzar that Daniel accepted was identical with that of Rab-mag, chief of the Magi.

The Magi stood in the same relation to the

Zoroastrian religion that the Apostles did to the Christian religion and their religions are alike in all important essentials, except in the former Zoroaster was the worshipful head, while in the Christian religion Jesus Christ is the Master and high priest, according to the order of Melchizedek.

The Zoroastrians believed in one Supreme Ruler of the universe, the creator of all things; the Christian religion teaches the same. The Zoroastrian religion taught the fact of a future existence; the Christian religion does the same. The Zoroastrians believed in a resurrection; so do the Christians. They believed in the existence of right and wrong, spiritual light and darkness; so do the Christians. The basic principles of morality are the same in both cults, only the Zoroastrian religion is greatly simplified and contained in three sentences, the terseness and simplicity of which are unsurpassed; they comprehend the totality of man's duties, which are, "have right thoughts, right words, right acts."

We must not imagine for a moment that the great Christian system of religion was the sudden outburst of religious thought crystallized for the occasion. Verily, the Christian religion is the fruitage of the purposes of God indicated to man and kept before his mind among various peoples and in different ages from the time the Divine information was imparted to the discomfited subjects of sin that "the seed of the woman should

bruise the serpent's head," until the confirmation witnessed in the bleeding body of our Lord and Master was made transcendently beautiful in the most sublime prayer that ever arose from the lips of god or man, "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do."

Following the sublime devotion of Daniel, notwithstanding the wickedness of the chosen people and their many estrangements from the paths of duty, there remained sufficient devout men to keep the truth alive, even among the Jews, or, more particularly, that Jewish sect known as the Essenes, whom even the wicked Herod held in high esteem, excusing them from taking an oath which he imposed on the rest of his subjects, of fidelity and good-will toward him and his management of public affairs. The practices and belief of the Essenes were along the line of those of the apostles, and no doubt were the connecting links between the doctrines of Melchizedek and that of our Master. "They are eminent in fidelity," says Josephus, "and are the ministers of peace; whatsoever they say, also, is firmer than an oath; but swearing is avoided by them and they esteem it worse than perjury; for they say, He that cannot be believed without swearing by God is already condemned. They also take great pains in studying the writings of the ancients and choose out of them what is of the most advantage for their soul and body."

The resemblances between the doctrines of the

Essenes and the teachings of the New Testament are very striking, especially in the usage of swearing. Jesus in his instructions on the subject says, "But I say unto you, Swear not at all, neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his foot-stool; nor by the city of Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King; neither shall thou swear by thy head because thou canst not make one hair white or black." Matt. v. 34-36. "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea and your nay nay, lest you fall into condemnation." James v. 12.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The Paradise of Pleasure, as the Garden of Eden is called by the Orientals, was, in fact, more than a myth, and of a more substantial character than Biblical students are wont to give it. While some of the language descriptive of that favored tract of country is a play upon words and of a fictitious character, yet there was a real basis on which the fabrication was builded.

Follow the course of the Tigris and the Euphrates from the Persian gulf up to their head-waters in the Armenian mountains, the source also of the Araxes and Phasis, the Phasis wending its way to the Uxine sea while the Araxes flows to the Caspian sea. The country consists of the uplands and mountainous districts of Ar-

menia and the pleasant valley in which the Euphrates and Tigris meet and through which they gently flow to join their refreshing waters to those of the Persian gulf.

It was there, before the sin of corruption crept in and despoiled the people, that the blessings of heaven smiled upon the world and all the joys of life were showered upon the inhabitants. Water was drawn from the valley by a system of irrigation that enabled the land to yield abundantly to the skill of the husbandmen. The climate was salubrious, the country healthy, the people moral and intelligent, and possessed of everything needful for all the comforts of life. What more did they need to make them happy? Did they not really possess the Paradise of Pleasure? and were they not a blest and favored people? And they would have remained so, perhaps, through the ages, had not they partaken of the forbidden fruit of sin by neglecting the civic pursuits of life and strayed from the paths of virtue and right living. They gave themselves over to the red hand of war, stimulated by avarice and fed on the blood and ruin of surrounding nations. But these nations in time turned upon their victorious neighbors and drove them away from their homes, razed their cities and temples, leaving nothing to witness their former greatness. In place of the once thrifty and happy people of the valley of the Euphrates and the Tigris, wild and savage people possess the wastes. In conse-

quence of the destruction of the drainage system of the country, poisonous miasmas rise and the country is uninhabitable save by the barbarians who run wild in its waste places. Thus most literally is fulfilled the prophesy: And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged. Isaiah xiii. 19-22.

From this Garden of Eden, this Paradise of Pleasure, the inhabitants were driven by the fiat of Infinite justice, literally fulfilling the allegory of the fall of man and the loss of Eden.

III

THE CONDITIONS WHEN JESUS CAME

There are three great factors in human nature that influence society. One is man's physical energy, which always leads him forward in the great battles of life, such as business, commerce, trade, the building of cities, and all kinds of physical and mental activities. This physical nature of man leads, when rightly directed, to all that is useful and ennobling to society. It also has its evil side, but evil is nothing more than the prostitution of good, which, when extended to extremes, leads on to war, carnage, murder, crime, debauchery, and the ills of human depravity in all its forms.

These conditions were threatening the Jews when the Master came. They believed in and cultivated a kind of theocracy, deriving its virtues, as they supposed, direct from God, as interpreted by their priests and prophets. Fraternity had no place among them; they oppressed the weak and dependent; encouraged strife, seditions, and conspiracies. They were a jealous, arrogant, superstitions, revengeful people.

The same grasping and aggressive nature, so prominent among the Jews, is characteristic in

some degree of other nations and peoples. Human nature varies somewhat at times, as circumstances and environment change; but humanity is generally about the same the world over. Our animal natures are always at war with our spiritual, and if we do not maintain a continual effort for our betterment as a race, we will soon lose the glory of a high civilization. The demands of the physical man are sufficient to keep his physical nature active and aggressive; but the spiritual man is more passive, and needs a constant and persistent effort to keep him from lapsing into a state of barbarism. That was almost the condition of the Jews when Jesus came among them as their Savior.

At that time man's worst enemy was man; Might was the arbiter of Right. Smarting under the Roman yoke, the Jews had become restless, discontented, and arrogant. As an independent nation they had ceased to exist. All political and religious rights had been taken from them. In their religion they adhered to the old Jewish rites; but religion did not influence their society to its betterment. All the abominations of the flesh and deviltries of the mind were in practice among them, with no better results among the Romans. They, too, were lustful, cruel, and grasping, encouraging the spirit of war as a pastime and conquest as a virtue. They sought greatness through the force of arms.

To modify these conditions and to lead men to

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a higher plane and to nobler ideals was the mission of Jesus. Another factor greatly influencing society is the art of controlling men and the organization of society through the strength and cultivation of the mind, to which the physical activities of our natures ought to be subordinated. In this factor of man's development the Greeks held the first rank. While they were not a race submissive to the demands of others, they were primarily an intellectual people, having attained the highest perfection of culture in many fields of learning, as philosophy, poetry, oratory, sculpture, painting, architecture, and mathematics.

The leading minds among the Greeks hoped to found a theory of government and establish society on a higher plain by the cultivation of the intellect and by subordinating the individual to the rules of good government through philosophy, and by that means secure the highest degree of happiness and stability to the people; but in that they failed, for intellect alone is not sufficient to round out a perfect life, either in the individual, family, society, or government: there is something else needed beside intellect, without which there can be no permanent happiness, contentment, or lasting success. An object lesson is to be observed in comparing the present condition of Greece with its former greatness. The Grecian philosophy, as such, is the pride and admiration of all men, but as a political factor it was a failure.

CONDITIONS WHEN JESUS CAME 121

Where now is Greece, that Greece of ancient lore?

The same sun lights its mild and mellow skies;

The same waters gird its firm and rocky shore;

The same mountains, their lofty heads arise.

Yet present Greece is smiling Greece no more;

She seems now but the pall of humbled pride;

The cause of which our sympathies deplore;

And mourn the course through which her greatness
died.

The classic tongue may name Demosthenes,

And cite the forum of his glory won;

Or may recount the deeds of Pericles;

But cannot boast of such another son.

Th' face of proud Athens, whose learning and skill,

Has won from the world its fondest esteem;

But the breath of Decay encumbered her will

And her greatness fled away like a dream.

Where now is Greece and the pride of her isles,

Where Pindar sang and Sappho lov'd and wrote?

Her learning now but through memory smiles;

Which students con and stately scholars quote.

Minerva and the Pantheon combine

To render Phidias ever after known,

Less only in the sculptor's art divine,

Compare they to the matchless Laocoon.

Thy stylus stands unrivaled, Apelles;

Thy brush gave Alexander form and grace,

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While he was moulding nations to his please,
On canvas flattered you, his sturdy face.

The learn'd to Euclid yet must go to school,
By theorems get the solid of a hole —
Pythagoras found a Deity by rule;
And through numbers proved that man has a soul.

When knights of arms seek prowess in the field,
And wish their names enrolled in verse or song,
With glave untarnish'd at the talest wield,
And shout Miltiades and Marathon.

There Æschylus took his majestic flights;
And sightless Homer, by his songs sublime,
Made rules to guide the lesser lights,
That flood a willing world with vapid rhyme.

Design of architect and workmen's skill,
On Elgin stone and architraves of gold;
The Acropolis claims our wonder still,
And makes us bow to master eons old.

Greece spoke through her grandeur, and lived in her
men;
Gilded the pride of the world by her fame;
But now she is weak as strong she was then —
She lives to-day in the shades of her name.

The stern hand of Time has crumbled her walls,
The night of her past has shadowed her domes;
The spires of her fanes her glory appalls,
And Greece has disgraced the name that she owns.

No champering steed sniffs the battle afar;
 No panoplied youth feels the pride of his race;
 The monk in his stole glooms the face of her star,
 And Greece wears the shroud of Greece in disgrace.

In the field of the intellect the Greeks led all other nations, and we cannot say they have been surpassed since. Although we excel them in the arts of industry and in the development of the sciences for the welfare of the race, and are now enjoying a higher culture than has before blessed humanity, yet with all of our greatness we go to school to the ancients in many things. We are a practical people, subordinating our lives and our political destinies to the dictates of reason, softened by a fraternal love and spiritual aspiration that blend the two worlds into one.

The third factor that permeates the nature of man is the possession of those uplifting qualities so fully exemplified in the life of Jesus. It is the culture of his soul, the expansion of his intellect, the development of his moral nature. Jesus inculcated the feeling of the tenderest love and the warmest sympathy for those in distress. The cry of the poor, the want of the widow, the helplessness of the orphan, and the grief of the broken-hearted were concerns of great importance, which he urged both by precept and practice. He fed the spirit of charity on the honey of kindness, and cast the saving looks of compassion on the steps of the wayward. He went down to the

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dregs of this world and opened a way through the gloom of death to a life eternal. He ever emphasized the double principle of the Golden Rule: "Do not unto others that which you would not have others do unto you," to which he added as an affirmative duty enjoined upon all, "Do unto others that which you would have others do unto you."

By the cultivation of the spirit of the teachings of Jesus, men's energies will be rightly and properly directed to the benefit of each individual and of society. To disregard his teachings is to resolve ourselves back into the condition of the Jews, smarting under the curse of God when Jesus came to save them; but they would not, and to-day they are reaping their harvest of sorrows.

THE JEWS

In the time of Jesus, the Jews were divided up into several sects, chief among which were the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. The most popular was the Pharisees; they, according to Josephus, appointed for the people a great many observances that came down from their fathers, not written in the law of Moses, and for which reason the Sadducees reject them and adhere to the written word alone. No traditions not found in the written law are to be observed; hence great disputes.

The Sadducees were able to persuade none but the rich, the populace not being obsequious

to them; but the Pharisees had the multitude on their side. The Pharisees lived meanly and despised delicacies in diet. They followed the dictates of reason and deemed that all things were done by fate. While men might act as they see fit, whether virtuously or viciously, yet God had so arranged all things that his will predominated. They also believed the soul to be immortal, and that under the earth there were rewards and punishments according to the deeds of this life.

The Sadducees acknowledged only the written law and objected to the obligatory character of all traditions. They denied the existence of spirits and angels in general, and held that the soul died with the body, with neither rewards nor punishments after death. They also denied special providence and made all human actions solely dependent on the will of men.

The Essenes, according to Philo, were a society of piously disposed men who in solitude, on the western shores of the Dead Sea, sought a retreat from the corruptions and conflicts of the world. They lived an austere life, held their property in common, wore a white robe, prayed and meditated continually, made frequent ablutions, and for the most part renounced marriage. They sacrificed no animals. They condemned logic, metaphysics, and even the physical sciences, as useless. They gave attention to ethics, recognized no authority but their own sacred books, and taught the equality of men. They have often been com-

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pared with the old Hebrew School of Prophets, the Greek Pythagoreans, the Stoics, Christian monks and modern Quakers. De Quincey has sought to identify them with the early Christians, who, surrounded by dangers, assumed the name and mode of life of the Essenes as a disguise, alike impenetrable to Jewish or Roman enemies and to timid and treacherous brethren.

Dark, indeed, was society under those conditions, still more deeply and severely disturbed by the political conditions of the country. The Jews, to whom Jesus was sent, were embittered against one another on account of religious differences, and against the whole world because of their subjugation by the Roman power. At no worse time, and under no more discouraging conditions, could Jesus have come as a pacifier, peacemaker, and spiritual leader. There seemed to be no defined, pacific policy among the people. Dissensions, contentions, jealousies reigned supreme, with no hope of a better condition.

Then Jesus came to lead them into a better life and a better condition, but his offers were refused and his blood shed on the cross.

JOHN THE BAPTIST

The life of Jesus cannot be written without a sketch of the life and mission of John the Baptist, for he was the avenue through which the old dispensation passed into the new, the bridge between the Old and the New Testament. John

the Baptist was the son of Zacharias, who was a priest of the course of Abia of the eighth succession. The course of Abia was a special branch of the Aaronic priesthood inaugurated, it is supposed, by David and set over a particular course of service of the Temple.

When the priesthood was first established among the Hebrews by Moses, it was made an inheritable office and confined to the tribe of Levi. The office was a very important and responsible one. The high priest presided over the Temple, administered at sacrifices, and exercised authority in all ceremonial and religious affairs of the Israelites. At first they were men of probity, judgment, and character; but toward the last the position became disgraced and lost favor with the people from the fact that many of the priests were ignorant, brutal in nature, and unfitted for their high calling.

But in the person of Zacharias God raised up a pure-minded, God-fearing and capable servant. His wife was Elizabeth, one of the daughters of Aaron, thus bringing to their son the full heritage of the office of priest from Aaron down. Elizabeth was a righteous woman, meek, lowly, fearing God, and walking blameless in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, as did her husband, Zacharias. They were both well stricken in years and had no child. In the first chapter of Luke we find that Zacharias went alone into the temple, while the multitude remained

in prayer on the outside. At that solemn hour the angel Gabriel came and conversed freely with Zacharias, instructing him what he should do, and informing him that his wife should bear him a son, whose name should be called John. The same angel afterwards appeared unto Mary, the mother of Jesus, foretelling to her the coming of that event in her life which was later to change so marvelously the subsequent history of the world.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Elizabeth, the mother of John, were cousins, but Elizabeth was much the older. Nothing is heard of John from his birth until he commenced to preach in the wilderness, at the age of thirty; his age at that time is put at thirty because under the law no one was allowed to preach until he was thirty years old, for he had to undergo the ceremony of annointment, which could only be administered at that age. John and Jesus were both learned in the Law of Israel. They were cousins and of about the same age, John being somewhat older, and began their ministrations at about the same time.

Where did they become learned and developed? The books are silent on those points, but it is evident that they went to school somewhere, or else they must have had the gifts of God to know without studying. In the development and preparation for spiritual work, it is necessary to be disengaged from all worldly complications.

Quiet, rest, and sweet communion with nature are essential. All those who have made an impression on the world as great reformers through spiritual unfoldment have gone to the seclusion of hill countries and mountain recesses, and there communed with the spirit of nature. When I say the spirit of nature, I would not restrict the term, for the spirit of nature in its broadest application permeates everything, and vitalizes everything with intelligence.

John and Jesus may have learned the science of spiritual manifestation among the wise men of the East who saw the star, or it may have been a natural development; but we have reason to believe that it was self-cultivated, judging from the processes of development of other great reformers. Buddha was a mountain recluse for seven years before he came before the world as an oracle of God, during which time he lived on the coarsest of diet and spoke to no man.

Mohammed secluded himself from society for five years, living as a recluse in the Himalaya mountains. We have no reason to believe that John took the same course of spiritual development, for it is recorded: "Now in the fiftieth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias in the wilderness, and he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Luke III. 1-3. That was an outpouring of the spirit of God upon him as he

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walked and talked with his God in the solitude of the primeval forests of Judea.

Jesus went through the same process. When he was baptized of John the heavens were opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, "Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the spirit into the wilderness, and after he was there tempted by the Devil and fasted for forty days, he returned with the power of the spirit into Galilee and commenced his ministry.

John was called the Baptist from the fact that he baptized the people with water. John's baptism was to take the place of the old Jewish rites of circumcision. Circumcision was a physical act by which the body was consecrated to the service of the Lord, with a figurative covenant on the part of God that he would care for the individual, as would also the nation at large. John's baptism was a spiritual baptism, in which the spirit was consecrated to God through a water baptism, as the body had been through circumcision.

John did not claim that his was a perfect baptism, only a bodily rite indicating cleanliness before God; for he says, "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latches of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose. He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and

with fire." "For by one spirit," say Paul, "are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." I. Cor. xii. 13. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Jesus Christ." Gal. iii. 28. "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Rom. x. 12, 13.

The baptism of John was not the baptism of Jesus; John's was of water, as a token of the cleansing of the body; that of Jesus was of the Holy Ghost and with fire for the cleansing of the soul. Fire was typical of purification, while the Holy Ghost was that spiritual gift that initiated the subject into the mysteries of the unseen world. No one can be baptized with the Holy Ghost unless he is pure in mind, in body, and spirit. There are some through whom the spirit can manifest itself who have not been baptized by the Holy Ghost,—those who sell their gifts to whosoever will buy; but they are of the order of black magic, and their works are the works of the devil. As an example, turn to the eighth chapter of Acts. While Philip was preaching Christ unto the people of Samaria, they believed and were baptized by water; but there was a certain man called Simon, who had been practicing sorcery and be-

witching the people through his powers. Beholding the great powers of Philip, he was baptized of him and continued with Philip for some time, "Beholding the miracles and signs which were done."

Peter and John then came to Samaria. Up to this time the Holy Ghost had not fallen on any of them that were baptized of Philip in the name of Jesus Christ. Note that the baptism in the name of Jesus Christ alone was not sufficient to endow the supplicant with the gifts of the Holy Ghost; there was something more needed,—the power of the Holy Ghost. When Peter and John went to Samaria, they imparted the power of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, with the enchantments incident to a pure heart, full faith, and dedication of the life to the service of the Lord.

"And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money." But Peter indignantly refused it, saying, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee."

John came in the fulfillment of the prophecy, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,

prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isa. XL. 3.

Note the difference between the doctrines of John and those of Jesus. John's were moral and referred to the duties of this world, while those of Jesus were also of the highest type of morality, and personal duty, but went further: they pointed also to a future life. "And the people asked John, What shall we do then? He answered and said unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none, and he that hath meat let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? John answering said, Exact no more than is appointed you. To the inquiring soldier he said, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely, and be content with your wages."

John imparted the highest Jewish morality to the people, commanding that which was right and condemning that which was wrong. He neither cajoled the great nor slighted the poor, and for this his young life paid the penalty.

Herod was tetrarch of Galilee and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea. Philip died, leaving a widow whom Herod then married. This act being wrong, John had the courage to reprove Herod of that and other wrongs of his, which greatly enraged the governor, who would have killed him on the spot but for the great esteem in which John was held by the people, who looked upon

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him as a great prophet; but with his own hands he arrested John and put him in prison. The consummation of his spleen came shortly afterwards when, on the occasion of the birthday of Herod, the daughter of Herodias, his wife, danced before the tetrarch and assembled guests so charmingly that Herod, in a fit of ecstasy, swore to the maiden to give her, in token of his appreciation of her performance, anything that she might ask of him. Being advised by the mother so to do, whose hatred of John for not approving of her iniquities was unrelenting, she demanded that Herod give her the head of John in a charger. This bloody request was complied with, and thus perished a most beautiful life, the forerunner of our Lord Jesus Christ, who took up the work where John left off.

JOSEPH

Joseph, the father of Jesus, was an old man, a poor carpenter struggling for existence by the practice of his trade. He was of the tribe of Judah and a direct descendant from David. Nothing is known as to when or where he was born; nor is it shown when he died, but it is supposed that it was before the crucifixion of Jesus.

Before his betrothal to Mary he lived in Bethlehem, but afterwards he went to Nazareth, where he probably lived during the remainder of his life. Joseph was the father of several children by his first wife, before he was married to Mary.

Joachim, the father of Mary, was a direct descendant from David, as was Anna, the mother of Mary.

The betrothal of Mary to Joseph is rather amusing as presented by the Apocryphal New Testament, as follows: "When Mary had arrived at the years of puberty, the priests who had her in keeping in the temple met in council and said, 'Behold, Mary is twelve years of age; what shall we do with her, for fear lest the holy place of the Lord our God be defiled?' Then replied the priests to Zacharias, the high priest, 'Do you stand at the altar of the Lord, and enter into the holy place and make petitions concerning her, and whatsoever the Lord shall manifest unto you, that do.' Then the high priest entered into the Holy of Holies, and taking away with him the breastplate of judgment, made prayers concerning her. And behold, the angel of the Lord came unto him and said, 'Zacharias, go forth and call together all the widowers among the people and let everyone of them bring his rod, and he by whom the Lord shall shew a sign shall be the husband of Mary.'" *Protevangelium*, viii.—XI Apocryphal New Testament.

The proclamation went forth, and on a certain day all the widowers came to the temple as directed. They brought their rods. The high priest took them and went into the temple to pray. After he had finished praying he distributed the rods among those from whom he had received them.

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The last one was given to Joseph. They were ordered to present their rods; at first there was no manifestation. The high priest then went back into the temple and inquired of God the cause of the failure, and he was informed that all had not presented their rods; one had been held back. The high priest returned and repeated his order to present the rods; that time Joseph presented his and a dove proceeded out of his rod and flew on the head of Joseph. And the high priest said, "Joseph, thou art the person chosen to take the virgin of the Lord and keep her for him." Joseph took her to his own house and said, "Behold, I have taken thee from the temple of the Lord and now I will leave thee in my house and go to mind my trade of building. The Lord be with thee." *Protevangelium, Chap. viii, Apocryphal New Testament.*

Women in those days had no choice of husbands; the father or guardian bestowed the hand of the maiden on whom he pleased. In this manner a man betroths his wife, that is, contracts to make her his wife at some future day. It was customary among the Jews after the betrothal to leave the wife with her parents for a considerable length of time, that the man might go home and put his house in order for the reception of his wife. This was an imperative law among the Jews. "And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife and hath not taken her, let him go and return unto his own house, lest he die in

battle and another man take her." Deut. xx. 7.

In conformity with this law, it is recorded in the book of Mary, chap. vi. 6, 7: "Accordingly, the usual ceremony of betrothal being over, he returned to his own city of Bethlehem, to set his house in order and make the needful provisions for the marriage; but the Virgin of the Lord, Mary, with seven other virgins of the same age, who had been weaned at the same time and who had been appointed to attend her by the priest, returned to her parents' house in Galilee."

Joseph, on returning from his home and work, according to the legend, found Mary in a delicate condition, which disconcerted him very much; he did not know what to do about it. He thought first to put her away secretly, that scandal might not fall upon him and Israel.

While he was meditating on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, and said, "Joseph, son of David, fear not. Be not willing to entertain any suspicion of the Virgin's being guilty of fornication, or to think anything amiss of her, neither be afraid to take her to wife, for that which is begotten in her and distresses your mind is not the work of man, but the Holy Ghost; for she of all women is the only virgin who shall bring forth the Son of God. And you shall call his name Jesus, that is Savior, for he will save his people from their sins." Mary, viii. 8-12.

Upon that assurance Joseph married her. The

only book of the canonical New Testament that mentions the betrothal of Joseph to Mary and the peculiar dilemma is Matthew, where the record is very short and very much in the language of the book of Mary; in fact, the authorship of the book of Mary is attributed to Matthew.

Because of the ignorance of those ages, in order to impress upon the minds of the people the fact of a Divine interposition in the affairs of men, extraordinary stories had to be invented and extravagant language used, as if God did everything in order in the affairs of nature, but used very extraordinary methods in the concerns of religion, whereas the manifestations of God in the affairs of men are the most simple and plain manifestations of nature.

NAZARETH

Nazareth, the childhood home of Jesus, lies nestled in the hills of lower Galilee, about sixty-five miles due north from Jerusalem. Of all the places in the Holy Land, or perhaps in the world, there could be no more fitting place for the residence of two such holy personages as Jesus and Mary his mother. The inhabitants were made up of mixed peoples; among them were Greeks, Romans, Gentiles, and different sects of the Jews, the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes. Their lives were crude and simple; for that reason the Nazarenes were a people despised by the Judeans.

Nazareth was tucked away in a small vale of

the mountains, on a low cone not more than seven hundred yards long by three hundred yards wide, with towering hills surrounding it that almost shut out the sky. Singular as it may appear, Nazareth, during its long life, which dates back beyond the memory of history, has never, so far as we know, been disturbed by internal strife or torn by the ravages of war, except during the crusades, and thus it seems to speak in silent tongue the admonitions of "peace, peace," the injunction of the Master to his followers. But in sight of the town lies the plain of Asdraelon, which, strewn with the bones of slain victims, stretches from the Jordan on the east thirty miles westward to the Mediterranean, thence on to the hills of Samaria, and over which, for four thousand years, have swept the armies of victory and defeat.

The simplicity of this lowly place is striking to a marked degree; it is unpretentious and simple; its buildings are made of the rough stones of the country, without care for style. The furniture of the houses is of the most simple kind. A rug on a dirt floor, a chest, and in some houses stools for chairs made up the furnishings. Nazareth was not laid off with streets and squares, as in towns of our day. The houses are arranged in irregular positions, with narrow paths leading to them.

West of the town rises a hill five hundred feet high. To the southwest may be seen the dark

ridge of Mt. Carmel, which appears to be a foot-way to the sky, for over its gray summit the blue canopy of heaven seems to hang; while beyond, the sparkling waters of the Mediterranean seem spread out as a bed for the sinking sun. On the east rises bold Gilboa; and a little to the west may be seen the summit of Little Hermon, where Saul, forsaken by his God, fell upon his sword to escape capture in that memorable battle foretold to him by the spirit of Samuel through the instrumentality of the witch of Endor. A few miles south and east of Nazareth towers the round top of Mt. Tabor, as a lone sentinel in the great valley of Estraelon, which for better evidence we will designate the Mount of Transfiguration, where Peter, James, John and Jesus received a holy visitation from the spirits of Moses and Elias, and Jesus was transfigured before them.

In this sequestered vale of Nazareth, shut out from the contentions of the world, Mary, the mother of Jesus, was born and reared. There is something about the life and appearance of Mary that pen cannot describe. The maidens of the town of Nazareth are recognized to this day as possessing that Semitic type of graceful beauty which elicits the admiration of all visitors. The same beauty of womanly perfection rested upon that place when Mary, the richest flower of the coming fruitage of God, smiled among them. The sweet charms of maiden beauty rested upon her well-formed features, and through her dreamy,

eyes was revealed a soul of transcendent purity. With grace of movement she was not strikingly unlike her maiden companions, but was the central attraction among them.

It was the duty and pleasure of Mary, with her companions, to go with her pitcher to the north part of the town each evening to get water from the Virgin Spring, as it has since been called in memory of Mary. The spring was the common resort at that time, but now the trough from which she filled her pitcher has succumbed to the ravages of time, and the stream itself is now but a muddy waste.

Through all the events of the ages, from the time when Belshazzar saw the handwriting on the wall in his drunken revelry up to the advent of our Savior, the directing hand of Omniscience threw around this town of Nazareth that quiet, simple, unobtrusive atmosphere the essence of which Jesus imbibed and reflected to the world all through his life and teachings. In looking over the events and circumstances that made it necessary for a Christ to appear, filled with the knowledge that would lead man out of the trammels of darkness into the effulgent rays of spiritual light, there seems to be that coherence of conditions, events, and surroundings through all the ages, from the time of Abraham to the raising of the cross on Calvary, which renders it absolutely impossible that the story of Nazareth is a fabrication conjured up for the occasion. Born

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in poverty, reared in indigence, surrounded by simplicity, Jesus made his advent into the world. It is among the meek and lowly that the great and pure thoughts are born to which our souls turn for their elevation and enrichment.

THE VIRGIN MARY

In the contemplation of the life of the Master, our minds involuntarily go back to the source of his physical existence, his mother, the Virgin Mary. For the first six hundred years of our era she was worshipped as a divine personage by the Gnostics, a kind of compromising sect embracing modified opinions of Plato, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Heraclitus and Empedocles and blending them in the theology of the early Christians. They maintained that our Lord had two natures, the human and the divine, that the human was of him until his baptism, when he became divine by the voice of God. This view was condemned by the council of Ephesus in the year 431. At that council Mary was decreed the "Mother of God." The object was not to honor the mother, but to maintain the true doctrine with reference to the divinity of her son, Jesus. Nevertheless, it did magnify the mother and now the worship of the mother is growing apace with that of the son.

Mary, like Joseph, was of the tribe of Judah, and of the lineage of David. The Biblical allu-

sion is the authority for calling Mary of the lineage of David. "The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." Ps. cxxxii. 11. Were we left alone to the New Testament, the history of Mary would be scant indeed, for she is mentioned but four times in the Bible after the commencement of Jesus's ministry. Once at the marriage feast at Cana of Galilee, John xi.; her attempt to speak to Jesus when he was assembled with his disciples, Matt. xii. 6, 46; Mark iii. 21, 31; Luke viii. 19; at the crucifixion, John xix. 26; at a gathering of the disciples at Jerusalem, Acts i. 14.

Were it not for the Apocryphal New Testament, we should know nothing of the birth, parentage, or early life of the mother of our Lord. From it we get the following information: Mary sprang from the royal race and family of David; she was born in the city of Nazareth, and was educated at Jerusalem, in the temple of the Lord. Her father's name was Joachim and her mother's Anna. The family of her father was of the city of Nazareth; the family of her mother was of Bethlehem. Their lives were plain and right in the sight of the Lord, pious and faultless before men; for they divided all their substance into three parts, one of which they devoted to the temple and officers of the temple, another they distributed among strangers and persons in poor circumstances, and the third they reserved

for themselves and the use of their own family. Mary i. 1-4.

As was the custom among the Jews, they had a yearly feast at the temple, but the offerings of none were considered acceptable before the Lord unless they were married and had issue. Joachim and Anna were unfortunate in this respect; they had lived together about twenty years, chastely, without any children. When the high priest saw Joachim coming with the rest of his neighbors, bringing his offering, he accosted Joachim and asked why he, who had no children, should presume to appear among those who had. This so discomfited Joachim that, instead of going to his home, he isolated himself from his neighbors and dwelt with the shepherds in the field, where he prayed to the Lord to remove his shame and give him issue, that his offerings might be acceptable and his standing among his neighbors be regained.

One day while Joachim was alone, the angel of the Lord stood by him in a prodigious light and the angel said to him, "I am an angel of the Lord sent by him to you, that I might inform you that your prayers are heard; therefore Anna, your wife, shall bring forth a daughter and you shall call her name Mary. She shall, according to your vow, be devoted to the Lord from her infancy, and be filled with the Holy Ghost from her mother's womb. She shall neither eat nor drink anything which is unclean, nor shall her conversation be without among the common peo-

ple, but in the temple of the Lord, that she may not fall under any slander or suspicion of what is bad." At the same time an angel appeared unto Anna, his wife, saying, "Fear not, neither think that which you see is a spirit, for I am that angel who hath offered up your prayers and alms before God, and I am now sent to you to inform you that a daughter will be born unto you, who shall be called Mary and shall be blessed above all women." In due course of time a daughter was born unto the marriage of Joachim and Anna, and at the age of three years they took her to the temple of the Lord and delivered her to the keeping of the priest, where she remained until her betrothal to Joseph as his wife. The betrothal of Mary and Joseph came about in this manner: she was kept in the temple and was educated there with other children of her own age. During her infancy she had daily intercourse with angels, and every day she received visits from God, which preserved her from all kinds of evil and caused her to abound in good things, so that at length, when she had arrived at the age of fourteen years, she became very popular in her conversation and her purity of life, and the priests concluded that she should become a wife. To this she objected because of the fact that her life had been devoted to the service of the Lord by her parents and by her individual choice.

To dispose of such a difficult case, for under the law and custom all maidens of the proper age

were required to be married, the high priest called together the principal persons of Jerusalem and the country surrounding that he might have their advice as to how he had best proceed in such a case. When they had met they unanimously agreed to consult the Lord on the subject and asked counsel of him on the matter. The high priest went into the holy of holies, the ark, and inquired of the Lord what should be done, during which time the persons concerned in the advice remained in prayer on the outside. And immediately a voice from the ark that all might hear said that all men of the house of David who were marriageable but not married should bring their several rods to the altar, and out of whatsoever person's rod a flower should bud forth, on the top of which the spirit of the Lord should sit in the form of a dove, he should be the man to whom the virgin should be given and betrothed.

Accordingly, at the appointed time all marriageable men of the house of David appeared at the temple with their rods, where on command they were to present their rods. Joseph, a man far advanced in years, drew back his rod, but all the rest presented theirs; but no phenomenon appeared and the high priest judged it proper to consult God again, when he was informed that he to whom the virgin was to be betrothed had not presented his rod. Joseph was therefore betrayed, and when he did present his rod a dove coming from heaven perched upon the top of it,

and every one plainly saw that the virgin was to be betrothed to him.

The ceremony of betrothal being over, Joseph returned to his own city of Bethlehem to set his house in order, and Mary went to her parents' house in Galilee, in accordance with the custom of the Jews after a betrothal. Mary was living with her parents at Nazareth. It was eventide when Mary took her pot to the virgin spring for water, when lo, the angel Gabriel appeared unto her as a messenger from God.

To break the spell the angel spoke. "Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor in the sight of God; the Lord is with thee and thou shalt conceive." With a fluttering heart filled with astonishment, mingled with shame and deep concern, Mary inquired, "Shall I conceive by the living God and bring forth as all other women do?" But the angel returned answer, "Not so, O Mary; but the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore that which shall be born of thee shall be holy and shall be called the Son of the Living God, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." *Protevangelium ix. 1-15.*

Mary returned to the house and her chamber was filled with a great light from heaven, and the angel spake again unto her: "You shall conceive without sin and bring forth a son while you are a virgin, and he shall be called the 'Son

of the Highest,' for he who is born in a mean state on earth reigns in an exalted one in heaven."

What joy was Mary's, as the advent of her child was honored as was never that of an infant before and never will be again. It was his awakening into physical life that induced the Magi of Persia, the Wise Men of the East, to follow his star for hundreds of miles across deserts, over mountains, into a strange country to present the new babe with their offerings. It was the awakening of this physical life that directed the shepherds to leave their flocks and herds in the field that they might go and pay their adorations to the new-born king. It was this babe that sent a smile across the face of heaven, and gathered to his lowly cradle the hosts of the angel world, singing as they came, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

The cup of Mary's joy was full, and as the babe grew in strength and in wisdom her soul went out in praise to God for his mindful blessings of her virtues and fitness to become the mother of God incarnate in the person of a spiritual man, blessed of heaven, honored of earth, followed by the wise, but shunned and hated by the vile and wicked. As he grew in grace, she grew in anxiety, which ripened into sorrow unspeakable and fathomless as she, the mother of a sinless child, saw her boy bending beneath his cross on the way to Calvary. What grief was hers as

she listened to the noblest prayer that was ever sent to the throne of God, as her only son gave up his life that we might see the light: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And with that prayer his last loving look fell upon the face of his dear mother, whom he consigned to the care of his most faithful disciple John, "Woman, behold thy son." And to his disciple he said, "Behold thy mother."

Did ever mother have deeper sorrows or greater woes? But as her son had freely given his life that the light of heaven might be seen of man, she was reconciled to her fate and went to the home of her guardian and friend John at Jerusalem, where she remained, as it is supposed, until the time of her death, a time of which we have no record. The last recorded evidence we have of Mary is in Acts, i. 14, when she and the eleven disciples were gathered together in prayer in an upstairs room in Jerusalem.

IV

WHO WAS JESUS?

For almost two thousand years the world has been inquiring, "Who was Jesus?" As yet no universally accepted solution has been given. Some call him the Son of God; others the son of man brought into the world as all other children, but endowed with extraordinary powers of intellect and possessing a character above reproach. Authorities on both sides of this question obtain their opinions from the Bible. We will give the statements of the Bible on both sides that our readers may judge for themselves. We are not here to *make* a life for Jesus, but to *write* his life. To do that intelligently and truthfully we must not consider Jesus in the abstract, but must take into consideration the intellectual standing of the people to whom the Bible was sent or addressed, and the motives of the authors or its books.

In those days people attributed supernatural agencies to everything they did not understand from the evidence of their five senses. They heard the voice of God in the thunder, saw his gleaming eyes in the lurid lightning, his wrath in the belching volcano, his goodness in bountiful showers and fruitful seasons, his music in the



(For description of this picture, see opposite page.)

I obtained the following description of Jesus from my friend, Alonzo Thompson, June 17th, 1907. He writes me concerning the description of the person of Jesus as follows:

"The following was taken from a manuscript now in the possession of Lord Kelly, in his library, and was translated from an original letter at Rome:

"IT BEING THE USUAL CUSTOM OF ROMAN GOVERNORS TO ADVISE THE SENATE AND PEOPLE OF SUCH NATURAL THINGS AS HAPPEN IN THEIR PROVINCES, IN THE DAYS OF TIBERIUS CÆSAR, PUBLIUS LENTULLUS, PRESIDENT OF JUDEA, WROTE THE FOLLOWING EPISTLE TO THE SENATE CONCERNING OUR SAVIOUR."

"There appeared in those days a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted as a prophet of truth, but his own disciples call him the son of God; he raiseth the dead and cures all manner of diseases.

"A man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with very reverential countenance, such as the beholders may both love and fear. His hair of the color of a chestnut full ripe, plain to his ears; whence downward it is more orient and curling and waving about his shoulders. In the midst of his head is a seam, or partition in his hair, after the manner of the Nazarites. His forehead plain and very delicate; his face without spot or wrinkle, beautiful with a lovely red; his nose and mouth so formed that nothing can be reprehended; his beard stockish, in color like his hair, not very long but forked; his looks innocent and mature, but eyes very clear and quick.

"In reproving he is terrible; in admonishing courteous and fair spoken; pleasant in conversation, mixed with gravity.

"It cannot be remembered that any one has ever seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep.

"In proportion of body, most excellent; his hands and arms most delicate to behold.

"In speaking very temperate, modest and wise. A man for his singular beauty, surpassing the children of men."

the same time, the fact that the same person can be both a subject and an object of a relation, and that the same relation can be both a subject and an object of a relation, is a fact which is not captured by the traditional logic. This is because the traditional logic is based on the assumption that the subject and the object of a relation are distinct entities, and that the relation itself is a distinct entity. However, in the modern logic, the subject and the object of a relation are not necessarily distinct entities, and the relation itself is not necessarily a distinct entity. This is because the modern logic is based on the assumption that the subject and the object of a relation are the same entity, and that the relation itself is the same entity. This is a fact which is not captured by the traditional logic, and it is this fact which is the basis of the modern logic.

whispering wind, his love in the invigoration of nature, his displeasure in famine, and his curses in the ravages of war. All good things came from God and all evil from his displeasure through the ministration of the Devil. They were principally controlled through their religious belief and the selfish demands of their physical natures. The basis of their religion was a belief in supernatural wonders in which God was individualized, that it was his office to pay them strict attention as his favorites of all the children of the globe.

With those convictions in the minds of an uneducated people whose passions ruled rather than reason, the fathers of the church had a Herculean task on their hands in presenting the life and works of Jesus in a way that would be acceptable to the masses, and at the same time answer the demands of reason and the coming intelligence of the world.

Considering the material they had to draw from they did remarkably well; for their work was unlike any other of an intellectual nature that had ever come before the minds of the people. They had to convince their judgment and at the same time feed their credulity; and this is yet the conviction of many among eminent divines, one of whom was no less a personage than Henry Ward Beecher, who believed that you must feed the credulity of men in order to excite their religious emotions.

With this great mental problem in view, with a knowledge that it must be satisfying to move the masses, the authors of the New Testament entered upon their tasks of writing the life of Jesus, each from his own standpoint of knowledge. Matthew and Mark were the only ones of the writers of the four Gospels who knew Jesus; they were his disciples and were acquainted with his life from the time they were called by him until his ascension. Luke wrote his gospel from rumor and the general belief of the people. John wrote from imagination, called by many inspiration, for inspiration is but imagination sharpened by intelligences from without in the way of mental impressions.

In studying the Bible we must take into consideration that our early Christian fathers, as the first exponents of the religion and life of Jesus were called, were dealing with a class of ignorant people in an age when there were no common schools, newspapers, or other means of mental culture than verbal instruction; though there were among the priests and the learned those who could read and write, the great masses saw things only through their five senses, and then but dimly. Had the Fathers of the Church treated the life of Jesus from a scientific standpoint his philosophy and true mission would not have been received. The early church fathers were wise enough to know that they must cater to the credulity of the masses to gain their attention.

They knew humanity too well to attempt to make proselytes by shooting ideas over their heads. To convince a person, one must shoot ideas at him, not over him.

The time is now ripe for a scientific study of the Scriptures with the assurance that intellect is sufficiently cultured to prevail over emotional ignorance and superstition, to the end that truth may prevail and the people be brought back to a scientific knowledge of the whence and whither of the race. In presenting the scientific side of the Bible we know we will arouse the prejudices of some who are wedded to their gods and would risk the loss of salvation rather than give up a pet dogma.

Who was Jesus? Was He the Son of God? In one sense, Yes; in another sense, No. When we say that Jesus was the Son of God, we apply it in a spiritual sense. When we say He was the son of Joseph, we apply the term in a physical sense. Man is a dual being, composed of a spiritual body and a physical body. The physical is of the earth, earthy; the spiritual is made up of those invisible forces which we call life and intelligence. In the prophesy of Isaiah the spirit of the Lord was to rest on the object of the prophesy, which is conceded to be Jesus. Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is a spiritual power and as such Mary was impressed through the power of the mind.

Before we can fully understand who Jesus was we must understand who we are. We have observed before that man is composed of three parts, the physical body, the life, and the soul. We have already shown what the physical is, but have not explained it. The physical part of man is the house in which he lives. The body in and of itself is nothing but a combination of the elements of the ground, about seventeen in number. If God had stopped in his act of creation when he was through with the body of Adam, he would have been no more than a lump of dirt; but when he breathed into his body the breath of life, that body had the power of mobility; it could move about but could not think, could not articulate, could not exhibit the powers of an intelligent being; but when the mind or soul took charge, he became a fully developed man.

To further illustrate: The body within and of itself has no sensation. When you look out on the beauties and wonders of the universe around you, it is not the body that looks out but the spirit in the body; it is not the body that hears, it is the spirit within which uses the organs of the body in the act of hearing. It is not the body that feels the sensation of pain, it is the spirit within the body. It is not the body that loves, hates, or thinks, it is the soul that makes the man.

The workings of the mind may be entirely taken away, and yet the body may live and ex-

hibit the powers of life; but stop the action of the heart, destroy life, and where is the soul? It has left the house in which it dwelled; it has taken its flight. It has gone to the rewards of its work; if it has sown to the flesh it will reap corruption, if it has sown to the spirit it will reap life everlasting.

When God created Adam He made the body; He then breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. Life and soul are associated, they go together; where one is the other will also be. While they perform different offices in man, they are associates for eternity. Life is a factor of nature, an element of God, and is as unending as God is infinite. The spirit or soul of man is but a borrowed adjunct of the Infinite, and God through His spirit in us and we in Him.

Great God Our Father and our love,
Our Maker and Protector,
Let us in Thy bosom dwell,
And know Thee as Thou art.

Who then was Jesus? He was the physical son of Joseph but the real Son of God through the power of the Holy Ghost, the infinite spirit of our Maker. Who was Jesus? If He was not a real descendant of the house of David, then all prophesy concerning the Messiah has failed and we must look again for His coming. Who was Jesus? If He was not the actual Son of

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God through the power of the Holy Ghost, then nature is deceptive, the science of being a foundationless fiction and the Bible itself a fabrication. We call attention to Matthew, i. 18, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, and He shall be called the Son of the Highest." And again it says, "And He shall be called the Son of God." Luke i. 26-35.

The Apocryphal New Testament is more explicit. When the angel of the Lord spoke to Mary on the subject of her coming son, she said unto him, in a spirit of astonishment, "What! Shall I conceive by the living God and bring forth as all other women do?" But the angel returned answer, "Not so, O Mary, but the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. . . . He shall be called the Son of the Living God." *Protevan-gelium* ix. 11-15.

As we have seen, the Holy Ghost is a spiritual, mental power. And as we have also shown that thoughts are organized forces, that by the force of thought God combined the universe, it follows that the spiritual thought of Divinity gave cast and force to the mind and soul of Jesus before his birth into the world; and as it is a scientific fact that the spirit is the man endowed with intelligence, Jesus was the Son of God, though he called himself "the son of man" over sixty times during his ministry. Both appellations are

correct. The title "sons of God" is used all through the Bible, and is used as a common appellation to-day by those believing in Christianity.

The practice commenced in the early dawn of man's existence. We learn from Biblical records that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took wives of all they chose. When the sons of God came unto the daughters of men, and they bore children unto them. Gen. vi. 2, 4. Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Hosea i. 10. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even them that believe on his name. John i. 12. As many as are led by the spirit of God are the sons of God. For the earnest expectation of the creature wait for the manifestation of the sons of God. Romans viii. 14, 18. That ye be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shall be lights in the world. Phil. ii. 15. Behold, what manner of love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. Beloved now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him. I. John iii. 1, 2.

While Jesus called himself "the son of man," his apostles endeared him to their hearts with more loving words, such as "Lord," "Master,"

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“Savior,” “Redeemer” and other terms. In the beginning of the gospels of Jesus Christ, the son of God. Mark i. 11. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried saying, Thou art the son of God. Mark iii. 11. And devils came out of many crying out, saying, Thou art Christ the son of God. Luke iv. 41. And I saw, and bear witness that this is the son of God. John i. 34. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God. John iii. 18. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the son of God, and they that hear shall live. John v. 25.

The Jews, like all ignorant races, were great sticklers for word worship, and like most people nowadays looking for the mote in the eyes of others, seeing the great work of Jesus and the good he was doing, became jealous and conspired to bring some accusation against him that he might be condemned. When he was in the temple at Jerusalem one winter day they surrounded him and plied him with many questions, one of which was this: “How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.” “I told you, and ye believed me not,” said Jesus. “The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because

ye are not of my sheep ; as I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me ; and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them to me is greater than all ; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father ; for which of those works do ye stone me ? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not ; but for blasphemy ; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods ? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken ; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am the Son of God. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works ; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him. John x. 24-28.

This conversation of Jesus is all fully explained in the 82d Psalm. " God standeth in the congregation of the mighty ; he judgeth among the gods. How long will ye judge unjustly, and accept the persons of the wicked ? Defend the poor and fatherless ; do justice to the afflicted and

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needy. Rid them out of the hand of the wicked. They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness. All the foundations of the earth are out of course. I HAVE SAID, YE ARE GODS; AND ALL OF YOU ARE CHILDREN OF THE MOST HIGH. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations."

That play upon words was rythm in the songs of the Psalmist and served Jesus in explaining his spiritual relations to the occult powers manifested through him, which the Jews could not, or would not understand. And there are many Jews in this age.

All the prophecies concerning Jesus were of his physical nature as a lineal descendant of David. Isaiah in the 11th chapter prophesies that our Lord was to come from out of the stem of Jesse, who was the father of David.

JESUS THE HIGH PRIEST

The life of Jesus presents to man the richest field of thought that was ever left as an inheritance to the race. There is always something new, inspiring, and rich coming up for our consideration in studying him. Intellectually he shows more diversity of culture than any other of the great minds that have blest the world with the harvest of their thought and expression. Some of them developed more of a scientific na-

ture than he from the fact that each of those scholars was a specialist devoting his life to a single individual subject; while Jesus seemed to grasp all subjects which he was called on to explain with a clearness and depth of comprehension that all generations admire. As a moralist none have as yet approached him in depth of conception and beauty of expression. As a spiritual mind his was the comprehension of the laws of man in their most significant importance. As a loving humanitarian extending the blessings of fraternity to the world, he is the prototype of all goodness. This quality of heart was manifested through his office as high priest after the Order of Melchizedek.

It is not generally understood that Jesus held that office, the reason of which I do not know. Of all the sermons that I have heard I never heard one preached about Jesus as the "High Priest After the Order of Melchizedek." The reason may be that it is too tame and practical to arouse the emotions of the susceptible. The church in the past has fattened on the emotions of the weak, but in the future the intellect must be in training or a new cult will be developed.

In studying the "Order of Melchizedek" we have but few land-marks to guide us. All we know of it historically is to be found in Gen. xiv. 18-20; Psalms cx. 4, what Paul said in Heb. v. 6, 7, and as it was exemplified in the works and precepts of the Master. We know that the Or-

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der of Melchizedek was a benevolent organization, the object of which was to do good, relieve distress, heal the wounds of the sorrowing, and assist humanity wherever and whenever such help was feasible.

When Abraham was returning from the defeat of the five kings his little army became weary, and while he halted in the King's dale to give it rest, "Melchizedek, king of Salem, went out to see him and brought forth bread and wine and refreshed the army of Abraham, and he was the High Priest of the Most High God. And he blessed Abraham and Abraham acknowledged him as his superior and paid tithes unto him." Adam Clark in his Commentaries on the Bible says, "There is something exceedingly mysterious in the person and character of the king of Salem, and to find out the whole is impossible. He seems to have been a sort of a universal spirit, and confessedly superior, even to Abraham himself, the father of the source of the Jewish nation."

After this, when Moses was leading the children of Israel through the wilderness, where they had to contend with all kinds of opposition and trials, he changed the order of society and established the priesthood of Aaron which took the place of the order of Melchizedek among the people. When the Aaronic priesthood had fulfilled its mission and a better condition was necessary, Jesus was sent upon the earth to re-establish the Order of Melchizedek, which order

must have contained all the principles of good society for the betterment of the race.

Melchizedek was called the King of righteousness, also the King of peace. Following the intendment of the Order of Melchizedek, Jesus came into the world as a peace maker, relieving distress, healing the sick, binding up the wounds of the sorrowing heart, visiting the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, doing good in every department of life, and bringing the beauties of heaven to the door of every man who would accept, but he did not hold out any inducement to the crime-dyed scoundrel who wished for a bankrupt court in heaven to relieve him of wrongs done on earth,— as Paul most emphatically says, “ We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil.” II. Cor. v. 10.

It was the mission of Jesus to teach people how to live, not how to die. If a person lives right, according to the teaching of Jesus, he will die right and he cannot by dying escape the realities of living. Jesus held out no hope for the mere asking. He made no promise to the sin-stained man that he might get into heaven after he was dead; the gist of the teachings of Jesus was that the only sure way to get into heaven is to sow the seeds in this life and take the smiles of heaven with you in the journey of death.

To the turbid waters of the soul Jesus spoke

words of friendship, love, and truth, the holy trinity of the binding elements of society. They are the rungs of the ladder from earth to heaven; they form the chart of all social and moral excellencies; and they soothe the ravages of selfishness to the softening precepts of fraternity, forbearance and purity.

The society of the Jews had eliminated those benign qualities from their practices and in their endeavors to oppress others they were themselves oppressed; they were reaping the harvest of the seeds they had sown. They desired relief and under the promises of the prophets of old they expected a Redeemer, but they expected him to come with the power of the sword of vengeance and lead them to liberty through the gates of carnage and war. The Redeemer of peace, love, and friendship was so foreign to their conceptions of a Savior that they spurned and despised the very person of Jesus. They had no conception of a spiritual kingdom on earth. They could not understand the meaning of such a proposition. They wanted a physical demonstration of the powers of God. They had been taught under the priesthood of Aaron that God was an individuality, with all the passions, prejudices, and attributes of man. He was considered a man of war, was subject to fits of anger, and had the servile nature of being pleased with flattery and adulations and praise. He had all the sensualities of gross meat-eating men. He de-

lighted in blood, in sacrifices, in wine drinking as offerings, which always were sent to Him as a precautionary means of safety, through the holy office of the priesthood. There were fruit offerings, bird offerings, kid offerings, and many other delicacies that would satisfy the taste of even the fattest occupant of the office of the Jewish priesthood. To do those things right and acceptably to their God it was necessary for some one to take charge of the holy duties of feeding God on the sweets of the land, that he might lend his smiles and good wishes to that particular people. So a priesthood was established that was to take the place of the more mild and humanitarian priesthood of Melchizedek, and as high priest was necessary, Aaron was appointed to that office, with his four sons to assist him. The order appointing them was made a perpetual statute and secured by being proclaimed by God himself as being an everlasting priesthood throughout all their generations. Ex. xxix. 9; Ex. xl. 15.

This priesthood was confined to the tribe of Levi, whose duties were to bear the ark of the covenant, to stand before God and administer unto him, and for those services they were separated from the other tribes of Israel. Deut. x. 8. Under this peculiar religion the children of Israel became very warlike, cruel and revengeful; the result was, they were often conquered and enslaved by other nations, and finally scattered upon the face of the earth without a country. Under

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this priesthood the people were taught that God administered his rewards and punishments in this life; they did not believe in a future existence, and under the Old Bible man was considered but a beast.

“I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts; for that which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them; as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast; for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust and all turn to dust again. Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth? Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for this is his portion; for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?” Eccles. iii. 18-22. Under such teachings it was no wonder the Jews became self-arrogant, warlike, and pillagers of other men's holdings.

The Order of Melchizedek had been supplanted by all the Jewish sects, save the Essenes. They held on to the faith of a future life, and that this life did not end all of either rewards or punishments; but they were too weak in purpose and spirituality to bring about revolution in the sentiments of the people and a Redeemer was neces-

sary ; for God never intended that the race should become wholly corrupt and beastly. To prevent the continuation of the rapid decadence then manifest among the Jews, the spirit of the order of Melchizedek had to be revived by supplanting the priesthood of Aaron by a better priesthood, through a more righteous and enlightened priest, so Jesus came into the world to accomplish a purpose, and that purpose was to do away with the Aaronic priesthood and re-establish a priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, as had been prophesied and foretold many times before. "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent: Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." Psalm cx. 4. All the learned commentators agree that this was a prophecy of the coming of Jesus. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Heb. iv. 14.

And again, "So also Christ glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee." Heb. v. 5. This is a very important passage: the keynote that relates Jesus to God as his only begotten son. "To-day have I begotten thee." Jesus was begotten of God through heavenly ordination as high priest. It was a spiritual gift and had reference to the sanctification of our Lord rather than to declare him physical son.

The order of Melchizedek was before the priesthood of Aaron, for he administered to Abraham four hundred and twenty years before the law was made creating the priesthood of Aaron. Melchizedek was represented as being without father or mother, without descent, having neither the beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the son of God, abideth a priest continually. This scripture had reference to his priesthood and not to his physical existence, on the same principle that "the king never dies," but abideth on the throne continually.

Full particulars as to the priesthood of Jesus the reader will find in the 5th, 6th, and 7th chapters of Hebrews.

The mission of Jesus upon the earth was to bring back the teachings and customs of the order of Melchizedek, in the mysteries of which order he was well versed. To say that he was a highpriest of the order of Melchizedek without his knowing anything about it is absurd. To say that he was made highpriest of the order of Melchizedek when there was no such an order is equally absurd.

The facts are, Jesus was sent into the world for the especial purpose of reinstating the order of Melchizedek as an improvement one, and independent of the priesthood of Aaron, and the materialistic teachings of the Jews, and for that they crucified him. It was the practice of the Jews to destroy every one who differed with them in

their notions of religion, and Jesus was not an exception. In fact that same intolerant spirit held a bloody reign over the nations of the earth for more than sixteen hundred years after Jesus.

THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST

The term "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" is so familiar in pulpit oratory that it has come to be a kind of universal creed used by all. While it is not a Biblical doctrine yet it is a useful, and I might say, necessary adjunct and foundation of the Christian religion.

This term leads us into the science of God and the relation we bear to Him and He bears to us.

In considering the science of God, we must not treat him as a personality surrounded by environments as individuals are but as the comprehension of all things. God is in and of all things, animate, and inanimate, and the author of all. God is absolute wisdom, not *of wisdom* but wisdom itself; therefore he is all wise. God is absolute knowledge, not of knowledge, but knowledge itself; therefore he knows all things. God is absolute thought, not of thought, but thought itself. God is absolute will-force, not of will-force, for no power willed God into being, but he is will-force itself; God is absolute power, not a creature of power but power itself, therefore he is all-powerful. God is absolute spirit, not of spirit, but spirit itself. These are some of the prime factors of God, the only Infinite One. On

the same principle life is a factor of God manifesting itself in every combination of nature, according to the chemical compounds of each being. Man is a compound of the elements of nature; that physical compound manifests his form of life. There are seventeen of the earth elements and perhaps more in the compound called man; behind and controlling these seventeen elements are as many spiritual elements in the makeup of each human being. Therefore man is both a physical and a spiritual being. In comprehending this scientific makeup, Paul recognized man as containing both a physical body and a spiritual body, both of which are eternal factors of nature, which as principles never had a beginning and will never have an ending; but his physical entity, when it will have served its purpose, will be dissolved and go back to its original condition to compose the framework of other physical entities; and his spirit evolve on to the state of perfection, where it will assimilate in the universal spirit of God. In the art of transmitting the human species along the line of life the wisdom of God has made it unnecessary for a special creation in bringing forth each human being; but man is brought forth through the laws of human generation, and his life existence conforms also to general laws which are the conception of divine wisdom.

It must be remembered that the Divine life of Jesus was the result of the science of spiritology

introduced in the formation of society in the days of Abraham and culminated with his life upon the cross. It must also be remembered that neither Jesus nor the Apostles stopped to argue the philosophy of their mission, as they conformed to the Divine will in accomplishing their mission on earth. They simply spoke and wrote of things as they were, and actions of men as they occurred, without entering into the philosophy, science, or reason of the respective events; hence the world has gone astray in a great measure in its speculations as to the nature of God, of Jesus and the Holy Ghost, never dreaming that they present the demonstration of the great science of spirit, and that Jesus was a physical exponent of that science. To understand the life of Jesus, then, we must study it from a spiritual and not a physical standpoint.

There is a spirit that permeates nature; you may call it life endowed with intelligence, if you wish. It makes little difference what name you apply to any of the attributes of God; they are the same by whatever name you may call them. That universal spirit is an element that is as eternal as God, because it is a part of God — not on the principle that a man's hand is a part of his body and cannot be severed from the body and leave the body whole, but it is a part of God on the principle that a drop of water is a part of the aqueous fluid of the earth, one portion of which may be in the circulatory system

of man, another in an animal, another in a tree, plant, mineral, or combined in the great salt body of the ocean; wherever it is, in whatever combination it may be found, it is water composed of two gases. Dissolve the compound and the parts composing it go back to their original elements.

Now the spirit of God is in every man, and it is pure spirit, as water is always pure; — in whatever combination it may be found, when extracted it is pure. The spirit of God is pure in every person, but its free action is impeded, diverted, and hindered in many ways,—sometimes through defects in the physiological development; sometimes through mental wantonness, sometimes through impressive spiritual forces of a crude and devilish nature.

While the word God is generic in its term, that infinity that holds and controls the universe is manifest in many individual forms and phases of nature, and is in every condition of man from the embryonic fœtus to the archangel that ministers to his wisdom in the realms of eternal light. The word God comprehends them all above the grade of man and spirit, in a Biblical sense and as used by Bible writers. This has been explained under the head of "Bible Gods."

Sometimes the spirit that the Jews recognized under the name of God was bad and led them into trouble and finally destroyed that people as a nation with an abiding home. Every nation has its god. If the people of the nation are good,

law-abiding, progressive, and moral, that kind of god attends and administers unto them. If they are immoral, bad, and self-degraded, their god will find them and lead them on, because there are evil gods as there are evil men, because all individual gods came from the earth sphere. As every nation has its god, so does every family, and every individual. In some instances the family god is very wicked and bad, and the family over which he rules is equally bad, disagreeable, contentious, and wicked. The same rule prevails in individuals; every individual has his god; some have bad and some good gods in their individuality, and their characters show accordingly. All of these different manifestations of God in man through the spirit are controlled by the proper or improper development of the organization and training of the individual. The life element and spirit of God is capable of combining with any phase of human existence. While God is manifest everywhere, and there is a way provided for man's progression, spiritually, mentally and morally, man can divert the upward trend if he wishes to do so, or take the wrong course in life and reap the results of his own waywardness. If a man falls, it is his fault and not the fault of God in His wise provision for man's ultimate redemption. It may not be the fault of the individual man, but the fault, in every case, rests with the individual or in his progenitors. A man to be right must be born right. If he is not

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born right, the laws of God have been disregarded and the unfortunate result follows. Let it be noted here that God never punishes any man: if an individual violates one of the laws of God, the violated law punishes him, and not God.

THE HOLY GHOST

What a beauty and pleasure as well as profit it is to understand the science of the spirit side of life, which Jesus taught by example, but which has been lost to the conception of men in their race after impractical chimeras based only in dogmas and theories without a foundation on which to build?

We have no evidence that Jesus was an educated man in the schools of ancient philosophy. He cannot be ranked with Thales, Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plato, and their compeers in philosophy and learning; but in the science of spiritual things, the basis of all science as well as all existence, they were to him as a tallow candle to the glowing sun. Jesus lived so close to God that he knew without learning, he comprehended and explained without going through the process of analysis and synthesis. He spoke, and his words were wisdom. He taught as never man taught. His life was light leading men out of darkness into the glories of God eternal. The foundation on which he builded was the eternal rock of truth resting in the bosom of God. He taught science by practice more than by precept. The

science that he taught is that occult power of God underlying every physical phenomenon of nature.

With Jesus was introduced the word "Holy Ghost" designating the difference between an angel from the celestial spheres and the departing spirit of man at the time of death. They both mean the same thing only in different degrees of purification. "Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people." Gen. xxv. 8. "In delivering his promises to Abram, God said, Thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace, thou shalt be buried in a good old age." Gen. xv. 15. "And Isaac gave up the ghost and died, and was gathered unto his people." Gen. xxxv. 29. "When Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet in bed and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered to his people." Gen. ixl. 33. "But man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" Job xiv. 10.

It is evident that in the Old Testament ghost was that element of man that left the body at the time of death, and went to its fathers. The same meaning of the departing spirit of man at the time of death is recognized in the New Testament, and most forcibly presented in the death of our Lord. "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Matt.

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xxvii. 50. Mark xv. 37. Luke xxiii. 46. John xix. 30. The giving up of the ghost is the act of yielding up the spirit at the time of death. When that spirit, or ghost, is purified and advanced it becomes holy and is then qualified to be a messenger of God, doing His will and performing services appertaining to their exalted position.

It is difficult for those who do not understand the science of the spirit side of life to at once comprehend the action of the spirit on persons yet in their physical form. They cannot comprehend how an individual in a spirit condition can as a spiritual force enter into the person and mind of an individual in the physical condition, and control him. The spirit of man is an organized entity; or, more plainly, a man after death is as much an organized being as one in the flesh; but the nature of that organization is different. For one is organized in the form of a physical body, the other is organized as a spiritual body; one is ponderable and subject to our five senses, the other is imponderable, as our thoughts are imponderable. Now there is a thought substance in nature, which acts on the brain as its battery as electricity acts on an electric battery. Now the battery does not create electricity, but is the instrument through which electricity acts in the transmission of messages. On the same principle the brain is a battery through which thoughts are assimilated and sent forth.

Thought force, that is, mental intelligence, and life force, is what the spirit of man is composed of. The brain, being a battery through which the power of thought acts and manifests itself, is acted upon by outside influences. The thoughts of one man stimulate the person of another in the physical body in many ways, most usually through the organ of speech, but not altogether by speech, by any means. It can be done by the eye, by conduct, and in many ways which we all understand. Now the spirit of man, being of the substance of thought, can and does penetrate the brain of living people and impress them to action through the power of thought, which is so natural that the individual thinks it is his own mind that is working, when perhaps it is the mind of some invisible power.

Does not magnetism infuse itself all through the system of man? Do not infectious diseases impregnate the body? Do not poisonous gases destroy the physical by penetrating into the system? Does not the brain of man become crazed by intoxicants? Is it not the fact that fear often produces death, when there is no other harm to the body than that which comes through the brain? These occult forces have wonderful power on the human system. Then, again, let us consider this fact. Man, in the physical, is a caged spirit, undergoing gestation in the body, and when he dies he is born into another condition, and if he has not finished his growth here he must

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complete it over there,—not his physical, but the man himself, the spirit, because the spirit is the man.

Now the spirit of man in the body and the spirit out of the body are of the same nature, only one is free and the other confined. The free spirit can act upon and influence the confined spirit and the confined spirit can influence the free spirit in this way. Thoughts are pictures, or entities in the form of mental pictures. No one can think of an object, without it being pictured before him. Try the experiment. Can you think of nothing? You must have something to think about, and that something is always produced in the form of a picture on the brain. Outside spirits can send those pictures on the mentality of an individual in more ways than one. The invisible powers of nature are greater than the visible, ponderable ones. In our usual way of viewing things we recognize the solidity of the minerals of the earth, such as iron, manufactured steel, granite, the diamond, quartz, as the substantial of the earth structure, spending our lives in studying their properties and uses to man, while the truth is they are the weakest of all nature. The invisible forces that constructed them can and do tear them down and destroy them, or return them to their original condition before they were formed into tangible objects for our uses.

Let us not, in our supercilious ignorance, dis-

regard those invisible forces; the most powerful of them all is the power of MIND, the power of THOUGHT. God thought, and his moving power, saturated with His infinite intelligence, made the earth and all things contained therein. Of that thought of God, one of His constituents is the spirit or living attributes of himself, a part of which is in man; and that spiritual force, to an extent, is individualized and made the servant of its Master, which servant is independent to a certain extent, but yet in general is subservient to the God who made it.

What is the Holy Ghost? We have shown, from the Bible and the New Testament, that the ghost of man is his departing spirit at the time of death. As the sequence, then, the Holy Ghost is a Glorified Spirit, or Holy Spirit, for those are convertible terms, and used in that way all through the New Testament. What proofs have we of that assertion? The highest evidence of heaven and earth, that of our Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus was trying to enlighten the Jews upon spiritual matters, he was compelled to use language that conveyed a double sense, a physical sense to them, for they knew nothing of spiritual matters, and a spiritual sense, to those spiritually enlightened. It is unfortunate that so many people can only comprehend the physical side of life now, spurning, to their own injury and debasement, spiritual truths. Listen to the words of Our Lord and drink them in as the spiritual

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waters of heaven, the wine of life eternal. When the Pharisees, unable to answer the advanced truths of Jesus, resorted to force, as some to-day when they are unable to answer an argument on divine subjects resort to the force of shallow sarcasm, appealed to the chief priests and requested them to take Jesus into custody. Seeing their ignorant tribulation and the impulses of evil in the shadow of darkness, Jesus broke into tears, his heart melted at their stubborn condition, and he exclaimed, with outstretched hands, “ ‘ If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, come and drink, drink from the fountain of spiritual truths and you will never thirst again. He who believes on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.’ But spake he of the spirit, which they who believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.” John vii. 37-39.

In analyzing this teaching of Our Lord, we observe two conditions: one, the power of the spirit on those who believed on him at that time.

He would bestow on those who came and believed a certain spiritual power; but he could not bestow the power of the Holy Ghost, because he had not yet been glorified. The Holy Ghost was of a higher nature than that of the spirit, and even Jesus could not bestow that power until he was fitted for that holy office, until he was Glorified, that is, duly empowered. After this Jesus was anointed by God with the power of the Holy

Ghost. Peter told the people of Caesarea how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed with the devil, for God was with him. Acts x. 38. Hope maketh not ashamed; because the Love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. Rom. v. 5.

In the first epistle of Peter, he speaks of those who preached the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven of the things which the angels desired to look into. I. Peter i. 12. At the Pentecost those present were filled with the Holy Ghost and spake as the spirit gave them utterance. Acts ii. 4. Acts iv. 31. Look ye out seven men, of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. Acts vi. 3. Simon, a man who used sorcery, was baptized by Philip at Samaria. When he ascertained the fact that he did not have the power to bestow the gifts of the Holy Ghost by laying on of hands, he offered Peter money for the gift. Peter said unto him, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gifts of God may be purchased with money." Acts vii. 15-17.

God did not only have messengers serving him under the title and power of the Holy Ghost, but there were angels also in the service of the Lord. And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way

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that goeth down to Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. Then the spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself unto this chariot. Acts viii. 26, 29.

After the crucifixion of our Lord the disciples being assembled together at eventide, when the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them and after proving to them that he was the arisen Christ breathed on them and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. John xx. 19-22. I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts ii. 1, 40. And they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the words of God with boldness. Acts iv. 21.

In Paul's travels he came to Ephesus and he there found certain disciples who had been recently converted to the faith. He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard if there be any Holy Ghost. Paul baptized them and laid his hands upon them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Acts ix 6. Paul, in speaking to the church of God which is at Corinth, of the revelations of God to them

informs us plainly that God reveals things unto man through the agency of the spirit, drawing a distinction between the perception of the natural man and the spiritual man. The natural receiveth not the things of the spirit of God for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. The Holy Ghost compares spiritual things with spiritual. I. Cor. ii. 11-14.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

No one knows when or where Jesus was born. It is conceded, however, that he was born at least four years before the commonly accepted time which begins the Christian era. The place of his birth is also a matter of uncertainty. The Authorized Version of the New Testament fixes the place of his birth in a manger in the city of Bethlehem, which is about five miles south and east of the city of Jerusalem. The Apocryphal New Testament places his birth in a cave near the city of Bethlehem.

When we consider the state of the country, the habits and intellectual development of the people at that time, both among the Romans and the Jews, we may not think strange that the chronology of our Lord is buried in uncertainty. It is also to be borne in mind that "Christ glorified not himself." It was the habit and purpose of Jesus, all through his life, to keep self out of sight, but his mission always prominent before

the people. At the time of the advent of Jesus into the world and throughout the duration of his ministry, the Jews were under the master-ship of the Romans, under whose yoke they struggled, mutinied, and conspired. The Romans hated the Jews and the Jews detested the Romans. That which Rome wanted Judea hated. That which the Jews wanted the Romans forbade. There was no congeniality between them. Under the Roman yoke, moral decadence fell heavily on the great body of the Jewish nation, while at the same time Rome commenced to totter to her very foundations. Her glory was fast fading and melting into the lascivious debaucheries of the emperor, Tiberius, and Might laughed at the appeals of Right, while all forms of heart moving religion were neglected. Spirituality was a lost sentiment. General morality found no home in the public heart. The art of war, the love of luxury, and sensual gratification absorbed the public mind.

Considering the wrongs and oppressions that were then fastened upon the helpless people, why should they not rejoice and pass into the ecstasy of delight at the advent of a deliverer? Not that kind of a deliverer that uses force against force, but it was the coming of that deliverer which spoke "peace" to the hearts of those who loved him. And an angel of heaven in a voice of cheer announced to the shepherds in the fields, who were trembling at the unexpected appearance

of those celestial messengers, "Fear not, for behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be unto all people, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." Luke ii. 10. And with the angel who brought the good news to the poor men of the field was "a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

And there, timid and joyful beyond expression, lay in the lowly manger, in the very arms of poverty and neglect, the Mother of our Lord. No wonder she was speechless; words were too weak and expressionless to impart her heart throbs of pleasure as she saw in her own arms her young child. Mary, the mother of God, transcendently pure, beautiful in her simplicity, glorious in her motherhood, the adored of the adorable and the choice of God for the most sacred gift unto the world, the gift of the promise of heaven and the love of God. The angel proclaimed her services, the wise men knelt around her bed of straw, while the oped eyes of the babe, in its first look of love, in silence exquisite, first greeted her as MOTHER.

And even that child, whose mission was only to help and save humanity, was conspired against by the powers of government and his young life sought to be cut off by him whose sworn duty

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it was to preserve order and protect the citizen in all grades of society as long as that citizen was unoffending to the laws; but the hatred of Herod knew no bounds, and his wily vigilance sought the life of the babe whom he professed that he wished to worship, as a veil of expression to the wise men that he might obtain from them the way of murder. Oh, crime detestable, which induced Herod, the wicked, to cause to be slain all the male children two years of age and under in Bethlehem and the coast round about in order to catch the babe born in the lowly manger.

But it was not to be. Jesus came for a purpose born of God, who was able to protect him against the deepest plans of villainous depravity; and one of his angels went to Joseph in a dream and warned him of the pending design and directed him to take the young babe and his mother and flee into Egypt and there remain until word was brought to him to return. On the information that those who sought the young child's life were dead, Joseph returned and went to the village of Nazareth.

THE STAR IN THE EAST

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, Behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east and have come to worship him. Matt. ii. 1, 2.

The phenomenon of the appearance of the star to the wise men of the east which guided them to where the new born child lay in the lowly manger at Bethlehem has been a perplexing puzzle for the theologians of all the past ages to solve. With us, with our present-day knowledge of spiritual things, with the light of science, history, and the Bible, we see no difficulty at all in its explanation. In the first place the wise men of the east were Magians, a learned class of men who lived in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates. From that class of minds, both learned and devout, sprang the genius of the Bible. It was from this class of men that Abram derived his learning, training, and spiritual associations with God. Let us understand that God always produces results through his instruments, which sometimes are men, sometimes angels chosen and selected for a particular purpose, sometimes the lower spirits and sometimes the elements of nature.

The star that pointed out our Savior has been reckoned by some to have been a veritable star from the stellar deep, but a second thought dissipates any such idea, for it would take the nearest star 4,500 years, flying with the speed of a cannon ball, to reach our earth, and when arrived here it would be many hundred times larger than the earth. Prof. Kepler tried to trace the conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, occurring in 1604, back to the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the latter half of the year of Rome,

747, which conjunction was joined by Mars in the year 748; and by this reasoning he thinks he discovered the year of the birth of the Lord, and that it was this conjunction which notified the wise men of that great event. All such speculations are too fallacious to attract serious attention, especially when we have that better authority, the Bible and New Testament. Let us always keep in mind that the priesthood of Jesus was that of Melchizedek, the priest of THE MOST HIGH GOD, and that the old law was to be set aside and another priesthood and a New Testament given to the world. Before this time the blessings of God were claimed to be for the Jews alone, but Jesus broke the thrall of that belief and became a savior of the whole world and not of a small petty few, the Jews. This fact throws a great deal of light on the fact that it was to the wise men of the East that the star first appeared; they were not of the Jews; they were Magians, whose devotion to God and knowledge of spiritual things made them fit instruments, in the hands of God, to bring the "glad tidings of great joy" first to the world. The star that preceded the wise men was no other than a spiritual light, emanating from an angel of the Lord sent to the wise men for the purpose of notifying them of the holy advent. The appearance of this star was prophesied fully fifteen hundred years before it came, and this prophecy was the key to the nature of the

star that actually appeared. In this connection let us call attention to the prophecy of Balaam. This same prophecy throws a great deal of light on the condition of sensitives, who in this day receive illuminations, both mentally and spiritually, from the spirit world. Balaam was a trance medium, as there are many in this day, but none of equal endowments because they are not devout and clean of body, mind and soul, or God would speak through them as he did in olden times. The spirit that entranced Balaam enabled him to speak with his eyes open; mediums of this day have their eyes closed. Balaam falling into a trance having his eyes open prophesied: "I shall see him but not now; I shall behold him but not nigh; THERE SHALL COME A STAR OUT OF JACOB, AND A SCEPTRE SHALL RISE OUT OF ISRAEL, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth." Num. xxiv. 17.

This was a parable and cannot be taken in its literal sense, as no parable can. Of course it was a prophecy of the advent of our Lord and the star that preceded the wise men. Jesus was a physical descendant of Jacob and out of that line should a star appear which should be the light of the world. "I shall see him but not now; I shall behold him but not nigh." Spiritually speaking, Jesus came as the life and light of the world. That idea is sufficiently made clear all through the New Testament.

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The star appeared to the wise men in the east far across the desert of Assyria. Before beginning their journey, which must have been some time before the actual birth of Jesus as it was a long way from the valley of the Euphrates to Bethlehem, they prepared themselves with rich and costly presents for the babe. From this fact it is evident that they knew that the Savior was to be born at that time. When Herod had inquired of them what time the star appeared and had sent them to Bethlehem commanding them to go there and search for the young child and bring him word that he might go and worship him, and they had started, "lo the star, which they saw in the east, went before them until it came and stood over where the young child was." Mat. ii. 9, 10. This star could not have been other than a spirit light, conducting the wise men to the very spot. This was a light guided by some intelligent force and from what we read of it, we must know it was an angelic visitation for at that very time as the shepherds were abiding in the field keeping watch by night over their flocks, "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them and they were sore afraid," but the angel told them to "fear not, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Luke ii. 9-11. And there were with the angels "a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the

highest and on earth peace, good-will unto man." After the angels went away into heaven the shepherds went to Bethlehem and there found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger, and they returned praising and glorifying God, for they had seen what the angels had told them of.

It seems as though some strain effort to build fabulous stories out of many occurrences recorded in the Bible as though people must have wonderful stories impressed on their minds in order to believe in the existence of God, or the divinity of the Master, when the simple story to informed people is all-sufficient to impress the truth, while those exaggerations make infidels and disbelievers in the world. When we comprehend the fact that there are two sides to nature, one a physical and the other a spiritual side, we will then understand the workings of the two and that which to the ignorant and uninitiated seems miraculous or absurd, will be but plain, simple facts, all produced according to the laws of nature and the powers that be.

V

JESUS' EARLY LIFE

It is a difficult task to write the childhood of Jesus from the fact that there is so little said about him in the authorized version of the New Testament, and the Apocryphal New Testament is so extravagant in its expressions that it is unsafe to give it credence except in those points that address themselves to our good sense and judgment.

We gather enough from the two editions of the New Testament to warrant us in saying that Jesus came from poor parentage, that Joseph was a carpenter working at his trade to earn a support for his family, of which there were two branches, one by his first wife and the other from Mary, the mother of Jesus. We have no data from which we can judge of the number of children in the family; of Mary's children, by Joseph, there were James, Joses, Simon and Judas. Jesus had sisters also but we have no record of the number or names.

After Joseph returned from his sojourn in Egypt, where he went by direction of an angel to escape the evil designs of Herod on the life of the babe, they took up their residence at Nazareth. The village of Nazareth was not only in-

significant but the inhabitants were looked upon with disfavor; they were not educated; they were rude in manners and regarded with contempt by the Judeans. When the reputation of Jesus began to excite the minds of the people it was asked, "Can any good thing come from Nazareth?" It seems as though Jesus as a person had everything to contend with, family poverty, want of education, a residence in an insignificant place and a member of a rough, uncultured, despised people, as all Galileans were in the estimation of the Judeans. Nothing but sterling worth and properties of mind and soul superior to others could have brought the young Nazarene into prominence at that period of the world's history; for at that time every department of society was running riot. All kinds of spirituality had been dethroned and sensualism, war, oppression, intrigue, and murder for place and preferment were the order of the times. To turn the minds of the people to a higher thought and appreciation seemed to be more the work of Divinity than of a poor, uneducated, and unportentious youth. Had he not had the favors and spiritual powers of God within him, Jesus could have done nothing in the way of teaching the people the facts of higher truths and a grander destiny for man than to eat, drink, fight, contend, and die as was the thought of that age.

Jesus did not have to be educated to impart the knowledge and perform the wonders he did

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before and among that people. He lived so close to the source of Divine wisdom that he knew everything without learning. The battery of his mind was so developed that when a question came up for his mental solution the proper facts clothed in proper language were impressed upon him. He could do nothing within himself, but the Father working in and through him was the demonstrating factor that pushed aside the veil of the two worlds and gave him a knowledge of a future state of existence and how best to act to obtain the highest blessings of both the here and hereafter. Some will perhaps call the powers of Jesus, as exhibited during his ministry, divine entrancement, others may call it inspiration, and others intuition, all of which powers are well known to those versed in the occult forces of mentality. Jesus was strongly endowed with mental powers far superior to his years and the culture of the age. This we learn from what little is said of him by Luke, "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." Luke ii. 40. He did not have to go to school as other children who desired to become educated and wise. He was strong of spirit and filled with wisdom softened and beautified with the grace of God, which was upon him.

There could have been no better place than Nazareth for his bringing up. He lived among that simple people without ostentation or the

spirit of pride being aroused within him. He lived as a natural child among the foothills of Lebanon, with no allurements to attract his attention from the contemplation of nature in its crude and simple form. There was nothing so good for this child of nature as independent poverty. He was not a pauper, neither was he a luxurist. His mind, his muscle, and his soul grew and were cultivated together. This was the schooling of Jesus. In this kind of a school he waxed strong of spirit and was filled with wisdom.

These powers of the mind of the child were first brought to the notice of the public when he went with his parents to the yearly feast of the Passover at Jerusalem. Jesus was then twelve years old, a mere hardy, sunburned rustic of a lad, running around and mingling with the people without care or attention from his parents, as is evident from the fact that when they had accomplished the days of the feast, they started home and were a day's journey out before they missed their child. They went back when they ascertained that he was not among the returning company, and searched three days in the city of Jerusalem before they found him, and when they did find him he was entertaining the learned doctors of the great city of Jerusalem, by answering and asking them questions which were so extraordinary that all who heard him were astonished at his knowledge and answers. Could an ordinary child have entertained such a learned

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audience for three days? Children of that age do not reason as a class but when they are engaged in conversation of learned subjects they simply repeat parrot-like what they have been taught from others, or from their books; but in this case, Jesus was not only answering astonishing questions but was in turn propounding questions to the doctors.

This quality of mind was characteristic of Jesus all through his life. He usually spoke in parables and displayed a unique wisdom unlike that of other men. But the people did not understand him, could not comprehend his parables. "They seeing see not; and hearing hear not, neither do they understand." Matt. xiii. 13. When he went to his own country, and among his own people, with whom he had been raised and who knew of his state of education and educational advantages they were greatly astonished at the scope of his wisdom and knowledge, and inquired among one another, "Whence hath this man this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?" Matt. xiii. 54-56.

Here lies the great secret of the wisdom of Jesus, as exemplified from his early youth up. His mind was trained to comprehend the philosophy of all spiritual truths and when a ques-

tion came up for his solution, the wisdom of God fructified his brain and he spoke and taught as "never man taught." This endowment was not a miracle but an extraordinary development of mentality. All men have this power more or less, but in some it is very much greater than in others. Some minds comprehend the force and bearing of subjects as soon as they are presented to them, others cannot comprehend at all. This power is evidence of the fact that in nature resides perfect knowledge and wisdom, the brain of man is a battery through which this knowledge and wisdom are manifested; the more sensitized the brain is the more it comprehends and the more easily it gives expression to the facts presented to the mind for solution. Jesus, being abnormally endowed, comprehended the great truths that were agitating the minds of the people at the time and he explained them in such a manner that it astonished the people and they inquired, "Whence hath this man this wisdom?"

Jesus was brought into the world for a certain Divine purpose; to answer that purpose his early surroundings were most propitious and the lack of a popular education is traceable all through his life. His mother was a devout and pious woman, having been reared in the temple under strict religious training from her fourth year until her espousal to Joseph, when she left the monastery for the practical duties of wife and mother. Joseph, his father, was a poor but

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pious carpenter, who earned a livelihood for his family by his daily labor. When Jesus was old enough he assisted his father in his trade and what education he received was from the oral teachings of his good, devout mother and honest, hard-working father.

Let it be borne in mind that the mode of educating the youths of those days was different from the school training of to-day. In the days of Jesus, students were taught orally; they did not have books treating of different subjects as now, but the learning of the ages was carried in the minds of the masters and given to students by word of mouth. Thus, while walking on the porch Socrates taught in the open market; Jesus taught so as he went from place to place, so did Paul, so did the apostles. The same habit was observed by the ancient Jews, for it is certain that the law of Moses was not reduced to writing until long after his death. The great Talmud was carried eight hundred years in the minds of the priests before it was reduced to the form of a book. The doctrines of the order of Masons and the practical lessons of that order to be observed by its members have been carried in the minds of its members for thousands of years and are kept in their purity because they do not allow them to be written and submitted to the criticisms of an ignorant world. For that reason they are kept as pure and undefiled as when they emanated from the minds of its founders in ancient days.

From the lips of his mother and the teaching of his father, Jesus then became acquainted with the law of Moses and the Prophets.

The old Jewish religion was a pure theocracy, in which it was impressed on the minds of the Jews that they were the chosen people of God and must obey His mandates and laws. Those laws and mandates were given to the people by the mouths of the priests and from this habit the crime of heresy sprang; to disregard the will of God as given by the priests and recorded by the prophets was a great crime and when proved or strongly suspected death was the wage at the hands of the executioner. There was no crime so great as that of advancing an idea in contravention to the teachings of the priesthood, or questioning their teachings in the least. There never was a time when the priests would tolerate an opposing opinion. Being unable to answer the honest questioner by arguments, the fagot was usually resorted to as the most convincing evidence of their right to dominate opinions in regard to religion.

This kind of argument was not peculiar to the Catholic priesthood alone but has always been used by the party or religion in power. The Stoics asserted it against the early Christian Fathers and adherents and the Christians complained most bitterly; but just as soon as they got in power they persecuted the Stoics and all others disagreeing with them as vigorously as

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the Stoics had persecuted them; when the Reformation came about, the Catholic church left no stone unturned to hunt down, spy out, and punish by death those believing in, or suspected of believing in the Protestant faith; and as soon as the Protestants obtained power, they hung, burned, quartered, and tortured the Catholics. That kind of religion has been the blackest curse the world has ever been subject to. That intolerant feeling and practice was what led Jesus to the cross.

While those persecutions were conducted under the name of the religion of Jesus, yet not one of them was inflicted but in direct opposition to the true mission of the Master, notwithstanding Luke attributes some cruel sayings to him, such as: "Suppose ye that I have come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay, but rather division; for from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Luke xii. 51-53.

"If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Luke xiv. 26.

"But those mine enemies which would not

that I should reign over them, bring hither and slay them before me." Luke xix. 27.

Luke never saw Jesus, never heard him preach or teach. He does not claim to have received his information by inspiration but from rumor and what his informants believed or told him. Such teaching is inconsistent with the whole life of the Master or any other good man and must be false. The facts surrounding the writings of Luke are these. The Christians were persecuted on every side by relentless enemies. Luke was a Jew schooled in the Jewish traditions, and as the God of the Jews often inspired those people to acts of bloodshed to avenge wrongs and carry on wars, Luke desired to inspire oppressed Christians with the feeling of opposition and even to acts of violence under the pretense that such things were taught by Jesus. Early Christians had to fight to sustain themselves, and to inspire them with courage Luke put this libel on the name of Jesus.

JESUS' BAPTISM

Having spent his youth up to the age of full manhood, having arrived at the age of thirty years, the age when it was lawful, under the Jewish law, for those who were competent from their knowledge of the law of Moses to enter into the service of the people as priests, Jesus left his home in Nazareth and its simple surroundings

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for a more extended field of labor in the vineyard of man.

John the Baptist, his second cousin, had already entered into the service of the ministry, being six months older than Jesus. John had spent his tutelage in the rocky, mountainous country of Judea, called the wilderness, where he lived in the most frugal manner. He subsisted on locusts and wild honey; his clothing was of camel's hair and around his loins was a leather girdle. Notwithstanding his uncouth appearance, his eloquence of tongue drew unto him great numbers of people, both from Jerusalem and all Judea, to hear him preach and to be baptized by him.

The Jews were divided into three sects, the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes. The Pharisees and Sadducees were not in good favor with John, neither were they with Jesus, but the Essenes were. The teachings and spiritual philosophy of Jesus were patterned after the doctrines of the Essenes, and the doctrines of the Essenes were the same as were taught by the Pythagoreans. Josephus says, "The Essenes also, live the same kind of lives as do those whom the Greeks call Pythagoreans." It was the Essenes who came to John to be baptized. As evidence of that fact, Matthew, in narrating the baptism of John, says, "When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism he said unto them, 'O generation of vipers, who

hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ' ' "

John's baptism in the river Jordan was certainly an impressive occasion. The multitudes that gathered around his standard, listening to his words of wisdom and waiting their turn for the ceremony to be administered to them, can only be equaled by the outpouring of the powers of God at the pentacostal services. The early sun had traced his rosy steps over the gloomy desert of the Jordan and was smiling upon the gathered multitude that lined the banks of the sacred river, with hearts atuned to the sweet words of John who held them as by a charm, rather, it would seem, than through the power of mortal man. Jesus was among them, but they did not know him. His life had been so unostentatious that he passed and repassed without creating other than the most common observation. John had so enraptured the people that they took him to be the promised Christ, or Elias. Everything was favorable for John to receive the honors of one sent by God to bring deliverance to the oppressed people. They were in expectation of a great deliverer and they mused in their minds whether John was the Christ or not; and as they looked upon him, not expecting to know who he was, for he had lived the life of a recluse among the mountain grottoes of rugged Judea and his own tribe did not know him, he said "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ' Make

straight the way of the Lord,' as said the prophet Esaias. I baptize thee with water but there standeth one among you, whom you know not. He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's latches I am not worthy to unloose."

How long John was occupied in the ceremony of baptizing the repentants of Judea we do not know, but that he was there for some period of time is certain; for the next day, when Jesus stood among the multitude at the baptizing, John seeing Jesus coming unto him, said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, 'After me cometh a man which is preferred before me, and I knew him not.'" It seems as though Jesus and John were strangers, though kinsmen, but Jesus was to become manifest to Israel through John, who had been directed by the spirit to baptize with water, to the purification of the body, but typical of the remission of sins, but who was told that he should receive a sign designating the chosen instrument of heaven who should baptize with the Holy Spirit. "I have beheld the spirit," says John, "descending like a dove out of heaven, and it abode upon him, but I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, he said unto me, 'Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Spirit.' And I have seen and have born

witness that this is the son of God." John I. 30-34.

Jesus came from his home in Galilee to John to be baptized by him but John refused the baptism saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" In this Jesus was recognized as the superior of John, and had a better and different baptism. John's baptism was of water, that of Jesus was of the Holy Ghost. The baptism of Jesus was a spiritual baptism, that baptism that one feels in the heart and which converts the soul to the service of righteousness. True followers of Jesus, when once baptized with that conversion, should ever keep it sacred and never violate their pledge. It is a sacred obligation and when once taken it would be better that you should never have been born than to violate it, or renounce it. That is the sin against the Holy Ghost that hath not forgiveness. It is of no light import but of great moment and importance. Jesus came to the baptism of John that he might openly fulfill the law as an example to others, because he replied to John, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness." Jesus placed stress on the term righteousness. Melchizedek was the king of righteousness. If a man is righteous, he is a walking example of the law of both God and man.

JESUS IN RETIREMENT

Having fulfilled the law of righteousness it became necessary for a silent and prayerful preparation before the active duties of teacher were entered upon. That is the law of silent prayer for spiritual purity, wisdom, and devotion to the service of God in the vineyard of man. Having resigned himself to the powers of the Spirit and being full of the Holy Ghost, he returned from his baptism by John and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where he fasted, prayed, and prepared himself for the mission for which he was born.

The seclusion of Jesus in that rocky desert, where John had spent the early years of his life, was to fit him, in a spiritual sense for the work of a seer, the work of a servant of God, that through him might be presented to the minds of the world the fact of an intercommunication between the two worlds, and the more important truth that life was eternal, that death did not end all, and that the soul did not sleep in the grave for an indefinite time after dissolution from the body, but that life is a continuous condition of man subject to his conduct during this life. To fit himself for that service it was necessary for him to go through a schooling of contemplative and spiritual communion with the unseen; for it is demonstrated that by contemplation and persistency of thought we accomplish

what we desire if our efforts accord with our motives. This rule is always good in spiritual matters and usually in the common affairs of life.

All great servants of the spirit-world go into retirement for a time to undergo a spiritual training before they are qualified to enter into the practical demonstration of the science of spirituality. Mahomet, before he received his communications from the angel Gabriel, retired into a cave in Mount Hara. All the Mahatmas and Adepts of India follow the same training. Moses was with the flocks of Jethro in the wild pasturelands when he saw the fire in the bush. Pythagoras required a long novitiate of silence. The Jewish priests had their Holy of Holies, which was held sacred; no one save the priests could enter that holy and sacred place. It was there that they communed with God and received their spiritual instructions. Zoroaster, it is said, lived for twenty years in the wilderness, subsisting during that time on cheese which never grew stale. He retired to a solitary mountain and devoted himself to the attainment of perfect holiness by silent contemplation. It was during this retirement that he wrote the Zend Avesta, the Persian Bible.

Sakya, surnamed Buddha, founder of the Buddhist religion, which bore the same relation to the Brahmin religion that the Christian does to Judaism, is supposed to have lived 1039 years before Christ. At the age of sixteen Sakya, sur-

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named Buddha, married a maiden named Ra. After a son had been born Sakya renounced his princely rank; he took up the life of an anchorite, and retired into a deep forest infested by wild beasts, lions, and tigers. There amid the primeval forest, with wild flowers and sweet songsters of the wildwood, he past his time in meditation and spiritual preparation.

Communion in the solitude of nature is very beneficial to those seeking spiritual purity and celestial help. To this end Jesus instructs those who pray to retire into their closet, "And when you have shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

Jesus never did a foolish or unnecessary thing. Had it not been for the advancement of the cause of his mission in life and his necessary preparation for his great work, he would not have retired to the barren, rocky wilderness of Judea for the term of forty days. The forty days of tribulation had more than a passing importance. The time had an esoteric lesson to impress which was hidden under number 40.

He was tempted of the devil, or in other words, that class of the unseen, known as evil spirits, of which there are many, which always delight in dethroning all virtuous and upbuilding causes. They leveled their shafts at Jesus in his lonely preparation for his work, but he said, "Get behind me, Satan." This class of spirits

beset every person at times and if they are not sufficiently fortified to resist, they fall by the wayside and become children of the devil. A great lesson is in that one command. If we all could say, "Get behind me, Satan," when we are tempted, we would, like Jesus triumph over our fell enemy the devil. He is a lurking foe, always ready to do his work of destruction and ruin, and the fairest are his favorite mark. But if they hold out, they will triumph and good angels will come to their relief as they did to the relief of Jesus, for after that "the angels administered unto him."

One of the greatest afflictions to the tender heart of our Lord, while undergoing the pinching wants of hunger during his long fast and the temptations of the devil:—the alluring offer of the whole world with all of its glories and fascinations for just one act of worship, one confession of surrender to the domination of the flesh over the spirit, one moment's turn from the light of truth and spiritual purity to the impressive demands of the world in its campaign of greed, and oppression with their triumphs over youth, virtue, beauty, and innocence—was the news of the fate of his most valued friend, who had proclaimed his coming and acknowledged his crowning glories, when he could have received them himself,—the news that John the Baptist had been placed in prison by Herod. This was a warning to him of what he might expect if

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he persisted further in his mission of bringing to the minds of the people the truth of a continued life after death, and in his efforts for personal reformation in the way of living; but Jesus knew his final fate, knew that an ignominious death on the cross between two malefactors was his to endure, was the reward awaiting him. What were they to his mind? They were rather glories to be sought than inflictions to be shunned. He could not shirk a duty whatever the world might say or inflict upon him. A noble example,—one that no man had ever given before or since, though the world has produced many martyrs to the convictions of their hearts! But Jesus is the only example of a man who has voluntarily given up his life to demonstrate a principle. How few of us will refuse the pleasures of sin for a fleeting season with full knowledge of its coming burdens for the sweeter walks in the peaceful charms of a spiritual life, knowing that at the end, close at our door, though seeming life may be prolonged, awaits the harvest of a life sown in the walks of righteousness! After the forty days of preparation in the wilderness Jesus departed and went to Galilee, to his old home, the home of his childhood, to the quietness of nestling Nazareth, amid the verdant hills of Galilee which he had often wandered up and down, absorbing from their hushed eloquence refreshing wisdom, while his soul went out in reverence to the God of his glory and

aspirations. He had passed the tutelage days of his youth in that sequestered place where he had gathered in the richness of spiritual culture and mental development that fitted him to cope with the most astute in learning, whose wiles were often used to entrap him, and which was as the armor of mail to the darts of doubt and disparagement. He could read the thoughts of those who purposed his discomfiture. He knew the designs of his enemies before they were expressed, and their cunning tongues he could answer with confounding eloquence. He had been baptized to fulfill the requirements of righteousness and had retired to the mournful embrace of the sterile wilderness for his last degree of preparation and soul culture, obtained only through meditation and prayer, and now he was ready to enter into the field of man and preach the gospel of promise to a benighted world.

On the Sabbath day after he had returned to Nazareth, Jesus went, as was his custom, to the synagogue to read. The book of the prophet Esaias was handed to him and he opened the book and read these astonishing words, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." He closed the book and handed it to the minister and said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

The astonishment this little episode created among the worshippers at the synagogue can only be pictured by transferring our imaginations back to the days of that simple Godworshipping people of Nazareth as they looked upon that young man while golden truths of spiritual knowledge and prophecy fell on their ears. With all eyes upon him, in the spirit of astonishment, they inquired one of another, "Is not this Joseph's son?" Thus at his first appearance in public after his triumphs in the wilderness Jesus laid down his platform of principles which were altogether humanitarian in their intentment. He was to preach the gospel to the poor, a class of people too often neglected in favor of the gilded show of wealth and power. He was sent to heal the broken-hearted, a blessed and heaven-born service, for those who heal the wounds of the heart and close the fountain of tears do a service to man that will find a requital in the acclaims of that angelic host when it is said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the kingdom prepared for thee." He was to preach deliverance to the captive,—those who had been led captive by the thralls of sin and unrighteousness,—to deliver them from the powers of darkness to the effulgent rays of heavenly light. He was to restore sight to the blind,—those blind in the way of spiritual truths,—and set at liberty them that were bruised and still walking in their wounds of soul to their destruction.

And well did he carry out the intentment of that platform during the whole of his ministerial services on earth, and in heaven he smiles upon those who remember the poor, the broken-hearted, the sin-struck captives, the spiritually blind, and the maimed of soul in the service of the power of evil. The true religion of Jesus is intensely practical and to understand it we need but to brush away the cobwebs of myths to see its practical beauties and its usefulness. The service of Jesus was that of a holy evangelist, lifting men up out of the mires of life and placing them on the smooth road of progress, with flowers of sweetest fragrance on either side to be plucked by those who will.

We are all passengers on the great ship of life, going to another country to encounter new realities and new experiences. Every person has a ship of his own and is his own pilot; to reach the port safely we should study the chart which Jesus has given us and be sure not to overload our craft and founder in the angry waves, for there is danger. It is well for us to be as mindful of the chart as we would if were we going to a new country on this side of life. Were we going to England, Italy, or any other country we had never visited, the first thing we would do would be to procure a chart and ascertain the best and surest route and where to get the best and safest accommodations there. The country after death is far more important than any of

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the political divisions of this earth and why men will pay so much attention to those of earth and so little to those of the other side is hard to understand. Jesus was not a false geographer, was not a false teacher. All of his lessons are practicable and easily followed, and no man will go astray who will observe and follow them.

THE ANOINTMENT OF JESUS

On returning to his own home and going to the synagogue he read, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." Luke iv. 18. This is the most important paragraph in the account of the ministerial duties of our Lord, from the fact that it is the one which marks the dividing line between the Aaronic priesthood and the priesthood of the order of Melchizedek, of which Jesus was made a high priest.

There were two kinds of anointing practiced in the Bible and New Testament. One was a material anointing, the other was spiritual. The material anointing was done by applying oil to the head or body. That was a common practice among the Jews and Oriental nations. See Deut. xxviii. 40; Ruth iii. 3; Mic. vi. 15. It was applied upon the introduction of prophets, or seers, into the service of God. I. Kings xix. 16. To such the Lord vouchsafed protection. "Touch not my anointed and do my prophets no harm." I. Chron. xvi. 22; Ps. cv. 15.

Priests were anointed. Ex. xl. 15; Num. iii. 3; Ex. xxix. 29; Lev. xvi. 32. It was also the custom to anoint kings. I. Sam. ix. 16; 10, 1; I. Kings i. 34. David was anointed three times. II. Kings ix. 3, 11, 12. Material anointment under the Jewish dispensation was done with oil.

The ANOINTMENT OF JESUS WAS A SPIRITUAL ACT AND DONE BY THE AUTHORITY OF GOD. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me," said Jesus. And John bare record, saying, "I saw the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, 'Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.'" John i. 32, 33. "That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." Acts x. 37, 38.

When Jesus had closed the book and handed it to the minister, he sat down and said, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled in your ears. I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine

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was throughout all the land, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman who was a widow; and many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed save Naaman the Syrian." Luke iv. 20-29.

Jesus in this conversation intended to impress on the minds of those present that the religion of humanity was preferable to that of the Aaronic priesthood; in other words, that the Jews practiced a false religion,—that the true and proper religion was that of humanity. At this imputation, those present became very angry, forcibly ejected him from the synagogue and took him to the brow of the hill whereon the city of Nazareth was built that they might cast him down headlong; but the strength of the spirit world was upon him and he passed through the midst of them and went his way.

It is strange how people who believe in a supernatural religion will get angered at those who differ from them. That is an infection that poisoned the minds of the Jews, but not theirs alone. It follows all along the path of religion even unto this day, but now the power is broken; the religion of humanity, the true religion of the Master, is supplanting that of dogmatism and many are becoming the saviors of men by extending unto them that fraternal aid and comfort that heals the sorrowing heart, binds up the wounds of the afflicted and sore of spirit, and

opens the eyes of those who are blinded in the duties they owe themselves, and by making the meaning of heaven to be that of a condition and not location, a heaven of this world as well as one of the next.

JESUS GOES TO CAPERNAUM

Imagine, if you can, the heart burnings of the Master while he was wending his way through the passes of the hills of lower Galilee to escape from the threatening aspect of his neighbors, who would do him bodily harm for extending to them the heart sympathies of humanity and opening to their minds the joys of a new hope of life made glorious through the shadows of the tomb. What anguish, as he looked back on the scenes of his childhood in the quiet environments of Nazareth and said, "Good-bye, sweet dreams, good-bye. Good-bye, mother, on whose warm breast I have listened to the word pictures of heaven in the accents of love. Good-bye, home, the shelter of my weary limbs in the storms of life. I leave you in body for Capernaum, where I go in the work of my Master, with the hope of a better understanding than that of my neighbors who would thrust me over the deep precipice to death for the simple act of reading to them a prophecy of myself from the book of Esaias, inspired through the agency of my God, whose service it is my delight to perform. Nazareth, nestling Nazareth, I love thee, for it

was there that was born in my soul an undying love for the world for which my life-blood is soon to ebb and flow in the agonies of a tortured death, to prove to a stubborn people that they have precious souls which may be stranded on the wastes of eternity or glorified in the enchantments of love eternal, made pure by my purchase of life on the cross. Good-bye, O thou enchanting scenes, good-bye."

Jesus, heavy hearted and tired of foot, went from Nazareth to Capernaum, which he chose as the place of his abode for a time; but it soon transpired that he had no home,—that he was a wanderer on the face of the earth, up and down the rocky shores of Galilee, despised by the many, a prodigy in the minds of some, and loved by the few, in a country of enemies made alert and ravenous because of his unselfish goodness, because of his undying efforts to lead his countrymen out of the spiritual darkness in which they were groping and in which they found food for all manner of sin. The Israelites, groaning under the yoke of Roman bondage, being a restless and revengeful people, feasted on the dreams of war, rebellion, assassinations, the assertion of liberty, the accumulation of power, the aggregation of wealth at whatever cost. They were living in spiritual darkness and when Jesus came with the light of love and heaven in his teachings and life, they hated him, for revenge was sweet to their minds and rebellion dear to their hearts.

They rebelled against every thing,—against the Roman power, against the law, against good government, against God and their own souls,—and he who would make a change in their sordid natures which were intensified by national disagreements, received but their suspicious hatred. It was that feeling which made those in the synagogue at Nazareth, on the first advent of Jesus as a teacher, thrust him out of the place and attempt his death by throwing him over the precipice. Then he said to them, “No prophet is accepted in his own country.”

This is not strange when we consider the forces of nature. In nature there are two elements, good and evil, right and wrong, hatred and love, cruelty and kindness. The evil side of man is always aggressive, the good side is passive. Love cannot knock down and drag out. Peace is persuasive, war aggressive. A good man will take a struggling brother by the hand and help him up, a bad man will crush him lower and lower, and he will hate you if you tell him of his wrong. Jesus hesitated not to point out evil and chide the evil-doer; for that, those living in darkness hated him and would have destroyed him at once had he not been sustained by a greater power than they. His time had not come; he had a work to do which was his to accomplish despite all the powers that might try to hinder him.

VI

PREACHING AND HEALING

When Jesus went to Capernaum he commenced his ministry, his teaching and his humanitarian services to the people. He followed the arguments of John when he was informing the people of the coming of the Master, saying "Prepare ye the way of the Lord and make his paths straight," and "Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus used the same words, "Repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." What did Jesus and John mean by such language? Were they speaking of a place, person, or condition?

Gratius said that the Jews divided the heaven into three parts, viz: 1, The air or atmosphere where clouds gather; 2, the firmament in which the sun, moon, and stars are fixed; 3, the upper heaven, the abode of God and his angels. To those, the Evangelists added a fourth, the kingdom of righteousness or the kingdom of God, which is found within each man's heart who lives according to the laws and precepts of the Gospels as taught by Jesus.

The kingdom of heaven, that Jesus and John spoke of, was the spiritual light which Jesus brought with him and proclaimed unto the world. Before that time the people, especially in and

about Capernaum, were living in spiritual darkness and in the shadow of spiritual death. Jesus desired to lead them out of that condition by preaching unto them a better way of life through which they could reach the kingdom of heaven or a condition of happiness. Paul said, "The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. xiv. 17. The kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven mean the same thing as used in these references. "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. vi. 33. The kingdom of heaven pertained to this life and to the earth condition. The apostles were instructed to heal the sick, and say unto them, "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." Luke x. 9, 11.

The Pharisees desired to know of Jesus when the kingdom of God should come. Jesus replied, "It does not come with observation, or with outward show, Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke xvii. 20, 21. We all have the power of having the kingdom of heaven, or God, within our own bosoms, by proper living, proper meditation, and proper acting, or we can have the other condition if we wish. It is all within ourselves. Jesus, knowing the philosophy of life and the way to promote the condition of happiness on earth, came preaching that the "kingdom of heaven is at hand."

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There is another meaning to the word heaven. This meaning applies to the spiritual condition and appertains to the next life, the condition after the dissolution of the spirit from the body. This condition is often obtained by sensitives who go into a trance when the spirit leaves the body and goes to the spheres called in the spiritual appellations of the New Testament, heaven. Paul says, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth), such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter." II. Cor. xii. 2-4. Paul was no doubt speaking of himself who, while in a trance, was caught up and taken to one of the spheres of the other world, where he heard and beheld those things which were unlawful for him to utter under the condition of society as it then was. In fact, to this day a person dare not tell the truth about the spirit world without having all the materialists and creed-bound Christians on his back. That is the only thing that the materialists and Christians agree in, to abuse those who know of the powers of the Holy Ghost and the beauties of the spirit world and who venture to tell it to others.

Paul dared not tell those things; he spoke of

them but dared not particularize. "And it came to pass, that while I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in a trance." Acts xxii. 17.

There are degrees in heaven. We have mention of seven degrees in the other world and above those, spirits enter into the condition of *celestia* and go on to perfection in the bosom of God, or a condition of absolute rest in wisdom and glory.

JESUS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

"And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim. The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." Mat. iv. 13, 16.

Mingled in this narration of the facts that Jesus left Nazareth and came and dwelt in Capernaum is a most important allegory that fathoms the very nature of the mission of our Lord as well as his title and the meaning thereof.

It is asserted by theologians that the affix "Christ" to the name of Jesus meant "the Anointed." There can be nothing further from the true meaning of the word, as we have shown in a former chapter that Jesus was never anointed under the Aaronic priesthood; and to claim that he was anointed confounds his priesthood with that of the Jewish and makes them both the

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same. None of the Jewish priests were ever anointed by the Holy Ghost, and Jesus was never anointed by oil as expressive of his priesthood; therefore, to assert that the word "Christ" means "anointed" is a forced construction and especially untenable in the light of the Bible.

The word "Christ" means "light" and no other reasonable construction can be placed on the term. As evidence of that fact let us call in some witnesses, the veracity of whose words no one dare dispute. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." John i. 4-9. "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John viii. 12. "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them." John xii. 35-36. "Awake, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. v. 14.

Among the prophecies are the following: For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee and his glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light. Isaiah lx. 2, 3. I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. Isaiah xlii. 6, 7. The foregoing are sufficient to show that Jesus Christ was considered the spiritual light of the world. His name was to be Jesus according to the command of the angel, but his title should be "Light"; his office, high priest after the order of Melchizedek. There can be no room for controversy on these points, as I glean from the Bible itself.

The word "light" means spiritual and intellectual light. There were many in Capernaum that sat in darkness. They were an ignorant community, composed of people from different sections of the country roundabout, without culture, or spiritual enlightenment. But when Jesus appeared among them they saw in his person, in his demeanor, in his teachings and philosophy, that he possessed great intelligence and great spirituality, and those that were in spiritual darkness beheld in the man comfort, consolation, goodness, kindness; and seeing that radiant countenance and illumination of person there awoke in them the impulses of a new life

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and so to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light sprang up.

On this one phrase, "those who sat in the region and shadow of death," hangs the most important concern of the world, and if it were studied and understood as it should be, we would see a reformation in the conduct of men that would revolutionize the world. "The region and shadow of death." What does the term mean? To understand the true meaning of the term we must first understand ourselves.

Who are we? What is our make up? The great stumbling block on which the world falls is the fact that men do not understand themselves. Jesus was much wiser than the world and he surpasses the great boasted intelligence of even the 20th century. He gave out scientific truths that the world does not comprehend, even now, as a rule. Man is dual in his make-up. He is made up of a physical body and spiritual body. The physical body is the house in which the spiritual man lives. The house in which the true man lives never offends, never does wrong; but the man who lives in the house and who controls it is prone to evil and wrong-doing. The house gets out of repair some times and then we say the man is sick, and when the house gets very badly out of repair the man inside moves out and leaves the old tenement. That we call death, but it is not death; it is simply a change of conditions, usually for the better. But there is a

death that we should look upon with fear and trembling and that is the death of the soul. That is the real death of the man, for the soul is the man. When our Lord went to Capernaum there were those who sat in the region and shadow of death. That is, they were so depraved and debauched that their spirits were perishing; death had cast its shadow upon them and they were sinking down, down, down. They were reaching that condition where there was no redemption for them; extinction in the darkness of evil was inevitable, for they had not the power to reform. Study this lesson well, friends, keep it before your minds and the minds of those of your household, that there are but two destinies for man,—one is the embrace in the bosom of God, the other utter extinction in the maw of Misery. One condition is that of perfection in goodness, the other is destruction in the throes of evil. There are good and evil in the world,—we are either reaping the harvest of one or the dregs of the other. Everything moves in cycles. We came from the bosom of Omnipotence. We shall return to that condition again, and become of the essence of Light and Purity if we follow the light of the Master in the deeds of well doing; or we will sink into the region of death in the extremes of darkness. There are two sides of nature, good and bad, happiness and woe. We know that from every-day experiences. Jesus came to give us light and give us knowledge and

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tell us how to embrace the one and avoid the other.

In our daily intercourse with men, we find many who have subjected themselves so much to the life of baseness and depravity that they cannot retrace their steps; they do not have sufficient strength to reform; they resolve and resolve only to relapse again into their old ruts and habits. Those people are in the region and shadow of death,—spiritual death,—and should they leave the body in that condition, the chances are they cannot reform in the spirit world but will sink and sink to the perishing point in the region of darkness. Criminals live in that spiritual atmosphere.

When Jesus went to Capernaum, a light penetrated the souls of those sitting in darkness. Jesus, the great humanitarian, did all he could to reform that people. He preached to them, talked to them, and did many wonderful things in their presence, but the town had become so corrupted that his teachings were rejected. When he could do no more he exclaimed in a prophecy that was literally fulfilled, "But thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment than for thee." Matt. xi. 23, 24. How well this

prophecy was carried out, for no one knows where this once proud city stood. The same curse was pronounced against Chorasin, and with the same results.

HEALING THE SICK

The mission of Jesus on earth was that of doing good. His vineyard was man in all the walks of life. To the proud he enjoined humility; to the rich a disregard of the fascination of worldly goods and the importance of spiritual riches, the storehouse of which is in the vaults of exalted happiness in the life to come, and he impressed on the minds of the world, the frailties and uncertainties of this life as contrasted with the never-ending future which is enriched or impoverished by our own acts with which we voluntarily encumber ourselves in our short journey here. As an example for us to follow, he went forth among the poor and distressed of body, soul, and mind, healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf, causing the lame to walk, the weak to receive strength, and to those obsessed by devils, or spirits controlling the minds of their victims, he commanded the spirit to leave the obsessed persons that they might be restored to the exercise of the mind and body and become sane again.

The same services that Jesus extended among the people he enjoined upon his disciples and through his disciples as an example for all his

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anointed. "Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he hath committed sins they shall be forgiven him." James v. 14, 15. The art of healing is a spiritual gift. "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the words of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same spirit; to another the gift of healing by the same Spirit." I. Cor. xii. 8, 9. The power of healing, as well as the benefit to those who receive the blessing depends on the belief of both the healer and the sick. "And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Mark xvi. 17. Even the shadow of Peter cured the sick. Acts v. 15. Multitudes came from out the cities round about Jerusalem to Peter and were healed. Acts v. 16. The power of healing was practiced all through the period of the Old Testament. But in all cases the ones seeking to be healed were, as a condition of healing, compelled to ask. "Have mercy on me O Lord, I am weak, Lord, heal me for my bones are vexed." Psalm vi. 2. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed, save

me and I shall be saved." Jer. xvii. 18. The sickness of the soul was also cured in days of old. "I said, O Lord be merciful unto me, heal my soul. I have sinned against thee." Psalm xli. 2. "I have seen his ways, and will heal him. I will lead him also and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners." Isaiah lvii. 18.

Faith was a necessary condition for those who desired the service of Jesus in bestowing upon them the gracious act of healing. A scribe brought to Jesus his son which had a dumb spirit, which tore the child and made him foam at the mouth and gnash his teeth and caused him to pine away. The disciples could not effect a cure of this child, so the father came to Jesus with him and asked his assistance. The boy fell on the ground, foamed at the mouth and was in a dreadful condition. Speaking to the father of the boy Jesus said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." The father said, "Lord I believe, help mine unbelief." Jesus then rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him and enter no more into him," and the spirit cried and rent him sore and came out of him, and the child was as one dead, inasmuch as that many said, "He is dead," but Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up and he arose. Mark ix. 17-27. Jesus healed the servant of the centurion through the power of faith. Matt. viii. 5-13.

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The act of healing was a science. Jesus did not stop to explain any of his works, as that of healing. He simply did the act, effected the cure and then went on without explanation. He acted on the same principle as the physicians who give out their remedies and direct how they shall be administered, without explanation as to the compound given. Just so did Jesus work. He effected his cures, but did not tell how they were accomplished. That problem was left to later generations. But in each case the mind of the sick or diseased person was worked upon. A trusting faith in Jesus or those who attempted the cure was necessary.

Why was faith necessary in the process of curing diseases? There was a reason for the exercising of faith or Jesus would not have required it. He never did a useless thing or gave unnecessary advice or required a useless ceremony. Long experience and observation have proved to man the power of mind over mind and mind over matter; and, as well, the community of thoughts and their simultaneous powers over the brains of different people at the same time. How often have you spoken of things, disconnected with the subject under consideration and some person speaks up and says, "I was thinking of the same thing." How often has your mind been centered on a person and in a short time that person unexpectedly comes into your presence. How often have you been

impelled by the force of thought to pay a visit to some of your neighbors and when you had entered the exclamation was, "I was just thinking of you and wishing that you would come." It is said that every time we think of an absent person we affect him for good or evil.

Thoughts are material substances and are potent factors of nature, in the same way that electricity and magnetism are substances of nature; and the brain serves in its function of the generation of thoughts just as the telegraphic battery does in the transmission of information from one place to another and almost instantaneously around the earth. The brain is a battery and thoughts charge that battery according to the will force back of it. If one wills to have good thoughts he has them, if he wills evil, evil ensues; if he wills health, health to a degree follows, and why? The physical body is builded through the powers of intelligence. The physical body does not build itself. Seventeen elements of the earth would always be distributed in and around the earth were they not acted upon by some intelligent force. That proposition must be apparent to every thinking mind. That intelligent force must have a conscious existence and must be under the domination of a superior force. The mind of man has all the qualities of will, reason, the accumulation of facts, and mental force that are necessary for his well-being. Now he did not create any of those forces; while he is

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associated with them and they are a part of his make-up as a man, they are, in fact, independent of him and play upon him in the same way that the sunlight plays upon the plant and gives it vitality.

Through the force of man's will, his person acts. He wills to go to a certain place and his physical organism takes him there. He wills to do a thing, and he does it. The body never would perform the act of locomotion did not the will first direct the act. The mind not only controls the body in the everyday vocations of life, but it is often the cause of death. How often we hear of a person falling dead from the effects of fright! Is that not caused from the power of the mind over the physical? We frequently learn of persons dying from the effects of good news, which struck the mind so forcibly that death followed. There are cases recorded where the lives of culprits have been taken through the force of mind over mind. Take the experiment, for instance, made on a condemned criminal of bleeding him to death. He was informed that he was to die from bleeding, his eyes were bandaged, his arm corded, and an incision of a slight nature made on the outside; warm water was poured on the arm and allowed to fall into a vessel in such a way as to allow him to hear it dripping. In a little while the physicians would whisper that he was going, going, going, that in a few minutes he would

be dead. The result was that he did expire. What caused that phenomenon? It was the effect of mind over mind.

We all know the effects of hypnotism on the person of an individual under its influence. The hypnotist can make the subject do anything and it has been proved in court and established by judicial investigation that hypnotism has been used to cause a person to commit crimes under the power of suggestion. In some cases it has been murder; often seduction and robbery of wealthy persons is produced through these influences. The power of mind over mind is incalculable when carried to its utmost. But in every instance the person acted upon must have faith; without faith there is no redemption and no cure. Is that a scientific truth? If so, why? Jesus never told us. The great divines have never told us only as a saving grace and that is problematical. No man was ever cured against his will. If a man wants to go to hell there is a vehicle always at hand. If he wants to get sick, he can do so.

Man's composition is of two parts, the physical and spiritual. The spiritual is the man, the physical the house in which he lives, as we have often said during the progress of this work. The spiritual is the thinking part of man, the active part, the part that acts, feels, hears, sees, loves, hates, and the part that acts upon all the five senses and stirs every emotion which affects the body.

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The science of mind is this: The physical is composed of intelligent atoms, little agencies, doing their silent work of building up and tearing down when we are asleep or awake. The intelligence of our make-up has a great deal of influence on those intelligent atoms and combinations of atoms. Whenever the mind is perceptibly affected, those atoms are also affected to some degree; thus, when we come in contact with a healer, one possessed of a surplus of spirit power and put our mind in harmony with his mind, we are affected more or less. Now add to this the putting on of hands as the elders were commanded to do and a cure is usually the result. The science of putting on of hands is this: The circulation of all persons who are sick is more or less impeded or accelerated. The healer has a surplus of magnetism in his person. By the contact of hands to the affected part the magnetism of the healer is imparted to the sick person and the affected part, and that additional life-giving power has an effect on the sick one. That, together with the power of the mind or soul, acting in harmony with the other soul, has a healing influence and in the case of Jesus, a cure was brought about in every instance. Had Jesus stopped to explain his magical powers he would not have had the influence he did, for the people are always after the wonderful and mystical. Talk common sense to them and they pass it by as of no consequence; call it some unnatural

power, they aver it is true and cling to it the tighter. It is mystery that gets followers. Common sense is too tame to attract attention.

CASTING OUT DEVILS

In writing and studying the life of the Master, in order to get the true genius of his works, we must consider the state of society, the manner of living, the education, the peculiar expressions and terms used to indicate certain phases of the mind, religion, belief, and what they meant by certain terms used. Events that are said to have transpired in the days of Jesus would be considered, in many instances, as mere figments of a disordered imagination, if reported to-day; and yet we must concede, that nature is invariable and the same laws through which an event occurred in the days of Jesus are in force at this time, if the conditions are the same.

When Jesus commenced his ministry, among other acts of healing, he cast out devils. The act of casting out devils is considered by skeptics as a mere play upon words to magnify the powers of Jesus in the minds of the ignorant and susceptible. In the minds of believers, it is considered as a miracle and as indubitable evidence of a divine power in the person of the Master, not bestowed on any other person at any time during the history of man.

To comprehend this problem in the work of the Master we must first analyze the meaning of the

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word *devil*. In those days people believed in personal devils and personal gods, which acted upon men and women in various ways; and in fact, many people believe, at this time, in a personal god and in the prevalence of devils which torment by visitations of evil persons both in this world and the next. It is a scientific fact, well known to all students of the spiritual forces of nature, that under certain conditions evil spirits can and do take possession of the organisms and drive out the individuality of the victims and make them talk and act like some one other than themselves. No well-informed person will deny that some people become obsessed, and believe, talk, and represent themselves to be some other person. We call that condition obsession. When found in this sad condition, generally the patient is sent off to an insane asylum as being insane, where he is kept in confinement perhaps for the remainder of his life. Among the ignorant, that condition is called insanity; among the spiritually enlightened it is called obsession; the same thing in the days of Jesus was called "being possessed of devils."

Jesus had power over that condition and could relieve the sufferer; there are people who can do the same thing to-day. The Catholic priests have a ritualistic form of driving out evil spirits, which is called exorcism; this is done by prayer, and a peculiar process of mental action by which the mind of the patient is controlled by the priest

or exorcist to such an extent that the obsessing spirit is driven out, or induced to leave the patient, and the person is restored to his normal condition.

Obsession, or being possessed of the devil, was a very common thing in the days of the Master,—more prevalent than it is now, and more troublesome. Among the Greeks and other ancients, they had a belief that at the time of the birth of every individual a demon, or spirit, was assigned to him, to attend, protect, and guide him during life. The Greeks believed that there were two such demons, or Genii, assigned to attend the person through life,—one a good demon and the other evil,—and at death the spirit was taken charge of by the attending Genii and delivered over to his punishment or reward, according to the judgment of the attending spirit.

Socrates asserted that he had a demon attending him at all times with whom he conversed and held communion and that when any of his friends was going to engage in any undertaking which would prove unfortunate his Genii informed him of the fact and he gave advice accordingly.

Those invisible powers were called by various names such as demons, Genii, Lares, Penates, Demigods, Heroes, Manes, Devils, and Spirits. They were presumed to have the power of transforming themselves into any shape or condition they wished, hence they were supposed by the early fathers of the Christian faith to be ungainly

monsters, some with horns, some with cloven feet, fire-like eyes, gnashing teeth, and of beastly and hideous appearance. With that impression on the minds of the ignorant the priests exercised great control over their flocks.

Adam Clark modernized the expression of "unclean devils" as used in Mark i. 23, Luke iv. 33 into "unclean spirits,"—that is, spirits of dead men who came back and familiarized themselves with the living. It has not only grown into a belief with some but from many observations and experiments on the line of psychic research it is asserted as a scientific fact, that man is frequently attended by spirits from the other side of life who exercise great influence at times over the living; thus, evil spirits will lead those whom they can reach into all kinds of evil ways and crimes; good spirits will inspire those they associate with and attend with good thoughts and intentions and keep them from the ways of evil. It is known that men can avoid the one and have the influence of the other class by his own efforts of mind and conduct. Evil and good cannot mix; if the thoughts of a person are evil, evil spirits will find comfort in that atmosphere and good spirits will be driven away. On the other hand, if the thoughts of an individual dwell on the good side of life and he lives with that in view, bad spirits do not find it congenial to be about such an one and will leave association with him for those who feed by their daily lives the sordid wishes of the vile of the other world.

Keeping in mind always, in studying ourselves, that man while in this life is but an incarnate spirit, that those who have experienced the change of death are disincarnate spirits, and that those spirits do not communicate under certain conditions with each other, and that the disincarnate spirits have great power over the incarnate, for evil, which is to be avoided, or for good which should be encouraged, we can select our spiritual company on the same principle that we can select our company on this side of life. And one is as important as the other.

JESUS AS A SENSITIVE

All through the old Bible are evidences of a future life in some form or condition, but it is not demonstrated or taught as a life of individual conscious entity. The ancient Jews had their God, angels, archangels, cherubs, devils, demons, spirits, ghosts, and invisibilities of various kinds; but there was no system, science, or proof of man's immortality, or conscious life after death until Jesus came. He demonstrated the truth of life everlasting, laying down rules by which continued life can be demonstrated and proved beyond a doubt. But to prove that fact certain rules must be observed or there can be no evidence adduced other than that of reason; and as reason is so veritable it does not produce the satisfaction that the demonstration does. In fact, reason unless the proper premises are laid to start from,

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will lead into materialism and total extinction of life at the time of death.

The power of the spirit world over this world is manifest in the life of Jesus when, according to the record, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to the city of Nazareth and there informed a young woman, Mary, that she should bring forth a son and that she should call his name Jesus. Being doubtful of the fulfillment of the angelic promise, and expressing some surprise at the coming of such an event, the angel to quiet her, said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." Luke i. 26-38. And the promised son should be called the son of God. The power of the Highest was a spirit power which should imbue her mind to the comprehension of beautiful thoughts and spiritual things; that such a power more or less controls the condition of motherhood at this time, is a fixed law of nature. The term Holy Ghost is by some theologians tortured into an entity, into the third person of the Trinity, but the original phrase will not justify that interpretation. The phrase is "*ek pneumatos haggion*," meaning, "out of pure spirit." The word *pneuma* is spirit. *Haggion*, or *aggaion*, means good, or pure. Therefore, Mary was under pure spirit power at the time Jesus was conceived.

The beautiful vision at the baptism of Jesus was a spiritual manifestation which was one of the links in the development of Jesus as a sensi-

tive, or medium, preparatory for his great work in demonstrating spiritual manifestations. This spirit manifestation is recounted in Matt. iii. 16, 17. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water, and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, AND HE SAW THE SPIRIT OF GOD DESCENDING LIKE A DOVE, and lighting upon him, and lo, a voice out of heaven saying, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased."

The interpretation of this text is generally that the multitude gathered at the time saw the real spirit of God in the shape and form of a dove come from out the sky and light upon the person of Jesus. No one saw this manifestation but Jesus and John. John says, "I saw the spirit of God descending from heaven like a dove and lighting upon him." John i. 32. Mark the language,—the spirit was not like a dove, but it was descending from heaven like a dove; it was the descent, beautiful, gentle, and soothing like that of a dove, that John saw.

When Jesus had become prepared for his work by cleansing in the form of baptism, and forty days of fast and seclusion in the wilderness, he entered upon his work for humanity. He brought the kingdom of heaven down to man by demonstrating that the way to heaven is through the gateway of human goodness of one unto another. The first service that Jesus rendered to his fellow-man was the act of healing, for which

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he was fully developed and prepared. He began at Galilee after the baptism which John preached. He could not have performed the great acts of healing had he not been fully endowed by God to do so. "For God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." Acts i. 37, 38.

THE LIFE THAT JESUS TAUGHT

How much we have strayed from the life that Jesus taught! He came into the world a poor, friendless, and unobserved being, unprepared so far as his surroundings were concerned for the ordinary battles of life.

The period of the world's history in which he came was as unforbidding as his preparation seemed unsuited to a great work. The people were spiritually dead. They scrambled for the spoils of the present and despised the demands of the future, although the old Bible from the third chapter of Genesis where we read that God walked through the garden and conversed with Adam and Eve to the last paragraph of the last chapter of Malachi, where the spirit of Elijah was promised which afterwards was sent in the person of John the Baptist, and which says, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord; and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the

children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse," is full of evidences of a future life and the intercommunion of the two worlds for the instruction and betterment of men on this side. But those great lessons were heeded not by the people; they had closed their eyes to the true necessities of life, and had given themselves over to the crowding demands of the flesh, to which alone they gave heed. Their hearts were locked against all spiritual admonitions. The wails of the poor and oppressed were sweet music to their souls, if advantage or revenge found solace there. Human rights were measured by the rule of might; the strong aggressed on the rights of the weak; and the voices of men's own souls were submerged beneath the waves of clash and clamor.

Meek, lowly, submissive, kind, and gentle came Jesus among them, and after he had been forty days in preparation and prayer, he opened his mouth with words of goodness and informed the people that the spirit of the Lord was upon him, that he had been anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, he had been sent to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that were bruised.

Those were some of his physical duties; his spiritual duties reached out into a broader and grander field; they penetrated the arcana of heaven and from the bosom and wisdom of God

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brought to man the glorious truths of life eternal in a house "made without hands." In this branch of his work he glorified the grave and on the smiles of the sweet angel of death he imprinted the word "peace." Arising from the cloud of midnight darkness which surrounded his people, he lighted a pathway that leads to the light of eternal day fraught with happiness and harmony, where all may dwell in the sweetest felicity, who will; but the jewels of his heart-work were rejected, trampled under foot by those he came to save, and for his offered goodness and services to his fellow-man he was compelled to bear his own cross to the hill of "skulls" where his services to man were requited by his own blood.

Was there ever such a sacrifice for such a cause? Was there ever such an example of self-sacrifice? Was there ever a more deserving example to man? Can there be found a better light to go by, a truer road to follow, than the one lighted by the love divine of our Master, Jesus Christ? Can we deny his lessons and be true to ourselves? Dare we close our eyes to his demonstrated truths and say there is no hereafter and that spirits do not commune with the living under certain conditions? Those who maintain such opinions must close their eyes to the demonstrations of the past, their ears to the voice of the ages.

Jesus foresaw the persecutions that would befall his disciples at the hands of those they would

enlighten, and instructed them as to their defense when they should be delivered up to the persecutors. He enjoins upon them the importance of relying on the spirits for advice and guidance. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Matt. x. 19, 20. The spirit here referred to is not an earthly father, but the protective father or guide, on the other side of life. In how many ways that father speaks to us. We hear him through the lips of innocence, from the wail of the woe-stricken, from the bruises of the heart inflicted with words of cruelty. We hear him in the silent hours of prayer when the heart goes out to love ineffable. We hear him in the whispers of the twilight of life. And O, if in the morning, when the heart pulsates with vigor and energy we would only stop for a moment and list to the tones of anxious love that the father sends burning into our souls, how many shoals we would escape, how many regrets we would avoid, how many lamps would be lighted for us along the pathway that leads to the eternity ahead? It was the love of that father that Jesus heralded along the way that led him to the cross. It is that love which warms a father's heart for his child, that wells as a spring of perennial flow in the heart of a mother, and an outpour of heaven that God sent along

the annals of time when "He so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believed on him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Has this paragraph any meaning when reference is made to everlasting life? Jesus never used or uttered a useless term. If those who have lived a deserving life will eventually evolve to the presence and goodness of God, as a corollary, those who have forfeited their own souls by burdening them beyond the power of reform must sink to the other extreme. If there is a heaven there must be a hell. I do not mean to be understood to say a place of extreme torment by heat but a mental and spiritual condition, where the lost one "roves through parched deserts, seeking a place of rest and finds none."

To save the world from that dreadful condition Jesus was sent and he who heeds not that mission mistakes himself. It does no harm to do right, live right, think right, and offer a helping hand to those in need. That is all that Jesus imposed upon us, or rather that is all that is necessary for our safety in the trend of existence. The others are ceremonial and not essentials. But as we are now on the spiritual branch of the teachings of Jesus let us keep to the subject.

Jesus was a living personification of love and kindness. The wails of suffering humanity wrung his heart with grief and knowing the doom of sin-sunk souls below the line of regenera-

tion or reform, he wept. Endowed with the greatest psychic powers of any man that ever lived he went about the country teaching, healing the sick, and exemplifying the powers of the spirit world through him to such an extent that his wonders reached the stolid ears of cruel Herod and so excited him because he had taken the life of John to appease the wounded pride of his wife, who was smarting under John's rebuke because she had married the brother of her dead husband, that Herod exclaimed, when he heard what Jesus was doing, "This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him." Matt. xiv. 1, 2.

When Jesus heard of the death of John his heart grieved him to the extreme of endurance and he departed from the people by ship and thence into a desert place, where alone he could commune with his great heart of love, and where none but God could hear; but he could not thus escape the curiosity of the people; they sought him out and great multitudes from the cities followed him on foot, taking their sick and afflicted with them. On seeing the anxious faces of the multitude following him, Jesus was moved with compassion toward them and he healed their sick. The magnetic power of the Master was so great that the multitude lingered in the great desert, unmindful of the approaching night or of their own comforts, with nothing to eat. Jesus would not have them sent away in that condition and com-

manded them to be fed but he was informed that they had but five loaves and two fishes,— a rather scanty repast for a multitude,— but Jesus commanded the same to be brought to him and after seating the people on the grass, he took the loaves and fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed and brake and gave to the disciples, who fed the multitude, numbering five thousand besides women and children. All received plenty to eat and after the repast, the disciples took up twelve baskets-full of scraps. In considering this wonderful phenomenon, we might wonder a little how it was that they were in a desert and yet were seated on grass. There was a great rocky stretch of country lying between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea in a region that was otherwise fertile, that was called in the New Testament, a desert.

Jesus, after he had fed the multitude and sent them away, commanded his disciples to get into a ship and go before him to the other side, while he went into the mountain to pray. While alone, in the silent hour of the evening, communing with his God in prayer, for it was then at the fourth watch of the night, a windstorm came up, the ship was tempest-tossed and the disciples became greatly alarmed. Jesus, seeing their condition, stepped upon the angry waves and walked upon the bosom of the sea toward the writhing ship. The disciples took Jesus to be a spirit and they were greatly alarmed and cried out with fear, but Jesus quieted them by saying, "It is I, be

not afraid." Peter, recognizing the Master, started to meet him, but finding himself sinking, cried out, "Lord save me." How many sinking souls make the same exclamation but without the faith of Peter, and many are submerged beneath the waves of eternity with no awaiting ship to take them to the other shore.

The transfiguration on the mount was a great phenomenon, both in a mediumistic sense and as an illustration of spirit-power of return. The phenomenon of transfiguration was not a new manifestation to the children of Israel, for Moses had been transfigured fifteen hundred years before this, as told in Exodus xxxiv. 29. Stephen was also transfigured: "And all that sat in council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Acts vi. 15. "Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother up into an high mountain, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light; and behold there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him, and a bright cloud overshadowed them, and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Matt. xvii. 1-5.

Jesus foretold his own death and knew the dreadful coming of that hour when supercilious bigotry enthroned in the souls of ignorance would force him to the cross. "The son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men and they shall

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kill him and the third day he shall be raised again."

JESUS' PURPOSE

Jesus was not sent to the Gentiles but to the lost sheep of Israel and on this point he was very tenacious when he first started out on his ministry; but the worst enemies he had to contend with from the very first, were those of his own nation and people. They contended with him because his disciples failed to wash their hands before eating, as was the custom among the Jews. On that occasion Jesus said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but the things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man." Jesus withdrew from their presence then and went out to Tyre and Sidon; and, behold, a woman of Canaan came out from those borders, and cried, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him saying, "Send her away, for she crieth after us." But he answered and said, "I AM NOT SENT BUT TO THE LOST SHEEP OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL." But on account of her faith and persistence, he did finally cure her daughter.

Jesus was so loyal to his mission that he forbade his disciples from preaching to the Samaritans and Gentiles. When he sent them out he said unto them, "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give. Get you no gold, or silver, or brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves, for the laborer is worthy of his food." Matt. x. 5-15. And he promised his disciples that those who were faithful and followed him, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall set on the throne of his glory they should sit upon the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt xix. 28, 29.

THE SABBATH, SUNDAY, AND THE LORD'S DAY

Jesus was a great reformer; wherever there was a bad law, rule of conduct, belief, practice, or action he was always ready to point out the wrong and suggest the remedy. One of the most notable instances was his repudiation of the binding force of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue given to Moses on Mount Sinai: Re-

member the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it. Ex. xx. 9-11.

This comandment is taught yet by some as a living law written by the finger of God himself on a table of stone, for the double purpose of enforcing a worship, and of observing the seventh day rest from labor. But it was nullified by both Jesus and Paul and has no binding force now as a divine obligation. There was no penalty attached to the breaking of the law as given to Moses on the mount, but afterwards the effect of the law was repeated and a penalty for the violation thereof was named, which was death. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among

his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested." Ex. xxxi. 12-17.

How far the violation of the command might be extended without incurring the extreme penalty of death had not been settled; but its enforcement was vigilantly observed and its extremes settled when one of the Hebrews was detected in the crime of picking up sticks on the sabbath.

"While the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp. And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses." Num. xv. 32-36.

The Mosaic law served as a general guide for

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the Israelites to go by, but in many instances it was rather vague and uncertain when it came to the practical uses of the people. That vagueness called for interpretations and special rulings; to meet those exigencies a class of learned men was formed called scribes, which answered that people as lawyers and judges of courts do the people of this age.

Celebrated among that class of expounders and instructors in the laws of Moses was Gamaliel, at whose feet Paul received his early education which induced him into a hatred of the teachings of Jesus and his followers with the wicked ambition to hunt them down and persecute them to the fullest extent.

The priests were a different class from the scribes; their duties pertained more particularly to the services in and about the temples, such as sacrifices, worship, and instructions in matters of religion; while the scribes interpreted the meaning of the laws and prescribed rules to govern the people in that respect. They were a higher class of public servants than were the priests, and had more influence with the people because their rulings made the laws of conduct for the Jews at large as well as the laws of individual conduct. In their capacity as judges they passed on the subject of the fourth commandment defining what acts were lawful and what were unlawful for the people on the Sabbath. In their definition they laid down thirty-nine different acts, with cer-

tain side acts, which were unlawful for the people to do on that day; among them were the forbidding of harvesting grain, or healing the sick.

With this class of the Jews Jesus had many controversies. They were on the alert to catch him in some act violating their laws, but Jesus was strong enough in mind and steadfast enough in purpose to do and advise that which was right and proper under all circumstances though death looked him in the face for his acts toward righting the wrongs of the people.

The old Jewish priesthood had served its purpose; the laws under which they officiated had become oppressive and the time had come for them to be repealed and new and better laws enacted. As Moses had been the mouthpiece of God during his administration, through whom laws were laid down for the Hebrews and the priesthood under the Aaronic rules, Jesus in turn became the instrument in laying down new rules and better laws than the old.

The only way Jesus had of reaching the minds of the people as to a change of the old for the new was to give them object lessons; to that end, after he had concluded his Sermon on the Mount he came down and commenced his ministry with the people, and the first thing he did was to speak to them as follows:

“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek

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and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." "And at that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the corn, and his disciples were anhungered and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was anhungered, and they that were with him; how he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profaned the Sabbath, and are blameless?" Matt. xi. 28; xii. 5.

Mark in giving his version of this incident says, "And it came to pass, that he went through the cornfield on the Sabbath day; and his disciples began as they went to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, THE SABBATH WAS MADE FOR MAN AND NOT MAN FOR THE SABBATH." Mark ii. 23, 24, 27.

It was also unlawful to heal the sick on the Sabbath day unless it was to save life. "And behold there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful

to heal on the Sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day will he not lay hold on it and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole like as the other." Matt. xii. 10-13.

Following the subject up a little further we will find what Paul said of the Sabbath days and of sumptuary laws. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things; another who is weak eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth; for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Romans xiv. 1-5. And in his letter to the Colossians Paul said, "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days." Colossians ii. 16.

The Sabbath day was regarded by the Jews as a sacred day and observed as holy in commem-

oration of the time when God rested from his work of creation on the seventh day. The Christians were instructed to disregard the seventh day and in its stead they were instructed to observe the first day of the week in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus.

From Eusebius we have the authority to believe that as long as the Jewish Christians held a considerable power in the church they exercised their influence to observe both the Sabbath and Sunday as sacred days. As expressed in the Apostolic Constitutions (vol. 8, 33), it was provided for as follows: "Let the slaves work five days, but on the Sabbath and the Lord's day let them have leisure to go to church for instruction and piety."

But the powers of the church were determined to show their disregard of the old Jewish customs, and to that end church council after council passed orders, decrees and rules expressive of their disregard of the Sabbath. The first authoritative step toward making the first day of the week instead of the seventh a holy day was taken by Constantine in the year 321, when he issued an imperial decree that all courts of justice, inhabitants of towns, and workshops were to be at rest on Sunday, with the exception of those engaged in agricultural labor.

This was the first bold stroke following up the doctrines of both Jesus and Paul, toward annulling the sacredness of the Jewish Sabbath, and the

first enjoining Sunday as a holy day. Therefore Sunday cannot be binding on the people as a divine institution. If Saturday or the Jewish Sabbath is a binding law of God and the people are under obligations to observe it, then no one has the power to alter it in any respect and he who picks up a stick on Saturday deserves the penalty of death. While this extreme is absurd so we might say of the law authorizing such penalties.

Many decrees followed the one first sent out by Constantine, excusing Christians from observing the Sabbath day.

In the year 363, at the council of Laodicea, Canon No. 29 was enacted, which forbade Christians from Judaizing and resting on the Sabbath day and actually enjoined them to work on that day. That council seemed to be determined to wipe out all Sabbatarian obligations for Christians, and as a result Saturday has never been recognized by any considerable body of the Christian people.

There are many false teachings imposed on people as having come from Jesus, the Apostles, or the New Testament. While some of them are good and wholesome doctrines for the betterment of society, they ought to be presented in their true light and given out as doctrines of the church, that they may leave no false impressions on the minds of the masses; for when a thing is once found out to be false in its conception the

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people lose respect for it though it is good within itself, and would have paid due respect to it had it been presented in its real origin. Among some of the false presentations of the church is "Sunday." Sunday is not mentioned in the New Testament, and it is not a New Testament or Apostolic institution.

On account of early prejudices, and a strong desire among the Christians to show their disregard of the Jewish institutions, decree after decree was made impressing the importance on the minds of the Christian people of keeping Sunday as a holy day, and not Saturday. In the year 425, Theodosius II ordered all games and theatrical exhibitions suspended on Sunday. At the third council of Orleans in the year 538, all kinds of labor were forbidden on Sunday. But in all those orders and decrees there was no divine authority for making and distinguishing any day of the week a holy day.

In that broad sense, as before quoted, both Jesus and Paul viewed the question, and no one has the authority to substitute Sunday for Saturday, or make a day holy when they decreed them all alike. There is a tendency among certain theologians to make Christian religion for themselves; the teachings of Jesus are not quite good enough for them; they want to improve on them; to that import they desire to build up a Sunday law of their own. There is a tendency among them to come to an understanding and

unitize in one strong battle against the liberties of the people by uniting church and state that the church may dictate to our courts, law makers, and officers, as to what the people shall and shall not do on Sunday.

The "Lord's day" is also an idea of later day conception. The Lord never had a day. There is but one place in the New Testament where the "Lord's day" is mentioned and that is in Rev. 1. 10, in which John says, "I was in the spirit in the Lord's day and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet." As a hygienic measure it is proper to hold one day in seven as a rest day, and there is no better day than Sunday, but it should not be enforced as a part of religion, or to favor any religious order or conception. Such an attempt would be in direct violation of the constitution of the United States. The first amendment to our constitution says, "Congress shall pass no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This law has always been a stumbling block to the over-zealous who desire the union of church and state, but it is to be hoped they will never succeed, for when that is done the liberties of the people will go with it, if the history of the past gives any clue to the events of the future.

It seems a little strange that any law should have the respect of the people which would make a commendable act lawful on one day and a crime on the next day. As long as a person does not

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encroach on the personal rights of another, all days should be open to his use as he desires.

JESUS THE CONQUEROR

Within the range of human effort there have been and are now great conquests and great triumphs in life. Those conquerors have made themselves felt in every department of human affairs. Some have hewn their way to glory and renown and placed their names on the pedestal of honor through the sword, others by the force of intellect in the moral, religious, scientific, and civil concerns of men.

There have been many great conquerors of intellect who have made their names immortal; among them stands prominently the name of Moses, author of the Decalogue and the laws of the Israelitish nation. The name of Copernicus is so associated with the science of astronomy and knowledge of our planetary system that as long as the one is regarded as a true science, the other will be remembered. Of all the great conquerors in the domain of intellect, who stands higher than Sir Isaac Newton? His "*Principia*," though accepted by but few thinkers for forty years after its first publication, is yet the final thought on motion in free space; of resisted motion and the system of the world. Dr. Franklin with a kite and small cord caught the lurid lightning and conquered its waywardness and now electricity is our common servant in the utilities of life. Victors

in practical philosophy are now innumerable and nature yields its mysteries to the all-conquering intellect of man to such a degree that the forces of the universe are but toying instruments in its grasp.

Eloquence has ever been the vehicle of sublime thought, from the flights of Job, the raptures of the Psalmist, and the philippics of Demosthenes to the beauty of Paine, the flights of Clay, the pathos of Spurgeon, the grace of Beecher, and the fiery logic of Lincoln and countless others. The tongue has its glories, but no less has the pen, when used for the flow of descriptive history by Herodotus; or to express the sweetest simplicity in the *Anabasis* of Xenophon.

But among the many leaders we must not overlook that man who was great in every thought and action. As a soldier none casts a shade upon his name, save Napoleon; as a statesman, the highest rank is conceded to him; as an orator Cicero only could reach a higher flight. He reformed the calendar, and as an author he sheathed his sword at the close of battle and wrote the memoirs of his own life at night. Who is referred to but Caius Julius Cæsar? Grant alone is to be compared with him as a soldier and author. The pen of Gibbon embellished Rome in her glory and uncovered her shame in her fall. England had her Hume and Macaulay, her sweet singing bards, her Darwin and Huxley. France had her Guizot, her Victor Hugo, and her inimitable Voltaire.

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The United States has a list of conquering pens in her many periodicals, directing the minds of statesmen, molding the sentiments of the people along the line of patriotic devotion to the principles of self-government, domestic purity, elevation of society, and the cultivation of moral rectitude. Of the great authors of the United States we cannot speak in detail. While America is young in the sisterhood of nations, her sons lead the world in the practical development of the utilities of life and in the elucidation of man's obligations to man for the amity of the world.

But there is one conqueror who stands alone, above them all; who has conquered riches with poverty, pride with humility, ostentation with meekness, hate with love. He succored the weak and suppressed the strong, reproved the tyrant and sympathized with the oppressed. The wails of woe found pity in his heart. He was the personification of goodness, kindness. He was by nature as tender of heart as a pure woman. He was a hero in fortitude and a great warrior in the battles of right against wrong. He was a conqueror of the passions of the body and a director of the intellect to the highest standard of men's duties one to another. The sick of body, soul, and mind were of his charge. He had a deep concern for the afflictions of the world, and in ministering to them forgot himself. And finally he transformed the dreaded king of death into a white-winged angel of peace which kisses the eye-

lids down upon this world that they may open again on a better and brighter one, and made the soul sing the immortal song of joy, "Oh, Death, where is thy sting? Oh, Grave, where is thy victory?" This was the conqueror Jesus whose words of truth pierced the hearts of men with the barbs of love and led them from the trammels of sin to the glories of righteousness, in mercy, charity and good will toward men.

Jesus, with boundless love and forgiving spirit, carried his own cross to the place of crucifixion and with calmness he met the frowns of scorn, with love he answered the shafts of hate, and as the cruel spear entered his blessed side and they could do no more, he uttered the grandest prayer that ever ascended to the throne of God: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." What a triumph! What a victory! What a conqueror!

VII

THE MISSION OF JESUS

It is not the fault of the New Testament, nor of the true teachings of Jesus that disbelief and infidelity stalk abroad in the land; it is because of what those who presume to be teachers set forth in their creeds and dogmas as the true mission of the master. The dogma that Jesus will save in the next world those who are unfit to live in this is so pernicious in its tendencies that good sense revolts against it and doubters arise. There is nothing in the four Gospels that teaches such a doctrine.

The mission of Jesus was to save people *from* their sins, not *in* their sins. When a sin is once committed it is for eternity and can only be purged away by repentance and by the undoing of the wrong by the guilty one as far as it is possible to do so.

The true meaning of the word sin when applied in a theological sense is "a violation of a moral obligation to God." According to that a sinner may be forgiven at any time by the mere asking. But Jesus did not come into the world to deal with sin in that sense. He came to guide people in the way of right living in this world, that they might inherit a better condition in the next. The

belief that the murderer can be saved from the spiritual results of his crime by a little lip service on the gallows, or after the crime is committed, by the confession of a belief in Jesus, is not only absurd but it is corrupting in the extreme. This is the kind of doctrine that breeds infidelity.

When Jesus came to the world, it was corrupted by all kinds of evil thoughts and deeds. To save, or keep, the people from those damaging and corrupting influences, he dedicated his life. He desired to lead them into the way of right living here, that they might be saved from the results of wrongdoing, both here and there.

“ We came into this world naked and bare;
We soon will go hence, but don't know where;
If we do all right here, we'll be all right there.”

When the angel came to Joseph in a dream he said, “Fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost; and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus; for it is he that shall save his people from their sins.” Matt. i. 20, 21. That promise applies to this life. It does not hold out a saving clause for the next. In considering the meaning of much of the New Testament, we must take the fact as attempted to be taught, rather than the literal meaning of the words used, because Jesus was compelled to use the language best understood by those he was

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talking to at the time. At the death of each person, there will be messengers from the other side to receive him according to the merits of his life, some to life everlasting, some to the gloom they deserve. The following is rather a play upon words, but it has a significance which, if rightly understood, will prove of value to us. Jesus in speaking to his disciples concerning his own death said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; AND THEN HE SHALL RENDER UNTO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. Matt. xvi. 24-27.

Paul was also a savior to the extent of his ability. He says, "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law, as without law, that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I weak that I might gain the weak; I am become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some." I. Cor. ix. 20-23. "Ye know this, my beloved brethren. Let every man be swift to hear,

slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls." James i. 19-21.

"It is better that ye suffer for well-doing than for evil doing. Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water; which also after a true likeness doth now save you." I. Peter iii. 17-21.

And Jesus after his ascension, according to the above text, "went and preached to the spirits in prison." To my mind, with our present education, this is the most important text in the whole Bible; for it most emphatically informs us that in the other life some go to perfection in the glory of God and others to their rewards according to their conduct in the flesh-life. There were spirits in prison that had been confined since the days of Noah, which Jesus desired to enlighten by preaching to them.

The following text is familiar to all but I have seldom heard the latter part explained in the way

it deserves. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through him. He that believeth on him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, THAT THE LIGHT IS COME INTO THE WORLD, AND MEN LOVED THE DARKNESS RATHER THAN THE LIGHT; FOR THEIR WORKS WERE EVIL. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reprov'd. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God." John iii. 16-21.

There are some difficult sayings in the New Testament as well as in the Old Bible. The last instructions that Jesus gave to his disciples before he took his final leave of the earth, are difficult of comprehension, and they may possibly be but the extravagant expressions of John; for there must be many things that Jesus both did and said that are not recorded in the Gospels. And in as much as the Gospels were not written until many years after the crucifixion faulty memory of expression may be the cause of many errors. But had there never been one word written of

Jesus the great crowning facts of his life are so interwoven in our natures we would be forced to a belief in them whether they were given in detail or not. For all men believe in the principles of doing right, and believe by doing right they are saved, not only from the penalties of the law, but from conscientious shame and the contumely of the public. Hope of a future life and a crowning conviction thereof are held by the most of men. Jesus only came to bring proof of what men already believed or hoped for.

“All Israel shall be saved,” was the declaration of Paul. “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, he shall turn away ungodliness for Jacob.” Romans xi. 26. “For the time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God: and if it begin first at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous is scarcely saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? Wherefore let them also that suffer according to the evil of God commit their souls in well-doing unto a faithful Creator.” I. Peter iv. 17-19.

Salvation does not depend upon what a man believes, but on the life a man lives. This Jesus taught, as is plainly seen in the case of Zacchaeus. Passing through Jerico, a certain Publican named Zacchaeus wished to see Jesus, and being short of stature he climbed a sycamore tree. “When Jesus came to the place he looked up and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste and

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come down, for I to-day must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down and received him joyfully. And when they saw it, they all murmured saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner. And Zachaeus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, To-day is salvation come to this house, for also he is a son of Abraham. For the Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost." Luke xix. 1-10. That quotation contains a point worthy of notice. If one desires to serve Jesus, he must seek him; or in other words if one desires to do right he must make some effort of his own. He must strive to do good and he must not only do good, but must be charitable and kind to the poor and dependent, and if he wrongs another, restore unto him; but add to it good usury. When that is done salvation will come to his house.

Where is heaven? Where is man to receive his salvation? Where is the kingdom of God? People generally look upon heaven as a place somewhere beyond the skies, and look for happiness there after death, but that is a wrong idea. Heaven is a condition rather than a place. A soul may be miserable and yet reside on the other side of the tomb. Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God cometh, Jesus answered

them and said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo, here, or, there! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke xvii. 20, 21. "A certain ruler asked Jesus saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, even God. Thou knowest the commandments: Do not commit adultery. Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor thy father and mother. And the rich man said, All these things have I observed from my youth up. And when Jesus heard it, he said unto him, One thing thou lackest yet; sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." Luke xviii. 21, 22. Salvation, according to John's teaching, also consists in doing good to our fellow men. When he was preaching and baptizing and prophesying the multitude asked him what they must do and he said, "He that hath two coats let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath food, let him do likewise. And there came Publicans to be baptized and they said unto him, Master what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort no more than that which is appointed you. And soldiers also asked him saying, And we, what must we do? And he said unto them, Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse any one wrongfully, and be content with your wages." Luke iii. 10-15.

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The Pharisees and Sadducees tried in every way to confound Jesus and make him either ridiculous, or a false teacher, ignorant of the law. Concerning the resurrection, they were very curious to know whose wife a woman would be who had had seven husbands. Jesus answered them, "When they arise from the dead they are neither married nor given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven. But as touching the dead, that they are raised; have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac and the god of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the living: ye do greatly err." Mark xii. 26, 27. That means God's law and government are of this life, which is the preparatory state, molding the condition of the next.

In all the instructions of Jesus, there is nothing more comprehensive than those teachings contained in his Sermon on the Mount. While there are some things in it that may seem unsuited to our state of civilization and education, yet it is one of the grandest sermons ever dropped from the lips of man. His blessings were of a soothing and peaceful nature which could come from no other than a kind heart. Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are the meek, blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the peacemakers and blessed are they who are

persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake, for great is your reward in heaven. In speaking of the disciples he said, "Ye are the salt of the earth and ye are the light of the world; let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Jesus said, "Think not that I came to destroy the law; I came not to destroy, but to fulfill." He enjoined on all an observance of the law; but "Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." We are instructed not to kill, not to be angry with our brothers, or call them bad names. If your brother has anything against you, go and see him and have the difference reconciled between you; if you cannot come to an understanding, call in some one else as an arbiter and let it be settled that way. That is good and salutary advice, and, if followed, most of the disputes of the world would be avoided; even nations would save much blood and much treasure by resorting to arbitration instead of to arms.

Women in those days were mere vassals of their husbands. They could be thrown out at any time for any cause and a man could have as many wives as he wished, with no offense to the law. With all of this, Jesus taught purity between the

sexes and denied any man the right to put away his wife for any other cause than that of fornication, and then he should give her a written divorcement. "If thy right eye cause thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast it from thee. If thy right hand causeth thee to offend, cut it off and cast it from thee." That is to say, in the practice of life, cut out everything that causes you to do wrong; let nothing stand between you and right living according to the highest principles of society, morals, and health.

He condemns profanity in all its forms. "Swear not by heaven, for it is the throne of God; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by the holy city of Jerusalem; nor by your head, or in any other form. Resist evil in all of its forms. If any man smite thee on one cheek, turn the other." This is figurative speech, of course; we must not be pugilistic; but the first blow must be quite light for an ordinary man to turn the other cheek for a similar smite; for a hard blow would require a parry, at least. The import of this lesson must be to turn our backs from insults, assaults and personal altercations. To turn your back upon an aggressor in a personal altercation requires more bravery than to bristle up for a fight. It does not require much fortitude to strike back when one is hit, but it does require fortitude to turn away and walk off; nevertheless this is what a man should do.

Do not go to law with your neighbor; you had

better give him your coat, that is, what he contends for, rather than to resort to the arbitrament of the law, which is expensive, vexatious and unsatisfactory. If you should win the suit, you would be the loser in the end.

"Love your enemies," seems to be rather a hard command to obey, but at the same time it is the only way to do. If you desire to be happy, entertain no hard feelings toward any one; have a friendly feeling for the whole world, and if you follow in that line of conduct, you will have no enemy to hate. Good-will to all is health, happiness, and serenity of life; ill-will is poison, disease, discomfiture, and enmity to all that is good, noble, and brave, in a true life. It wears wrinkles on the brow, scowls the face, ensavages the cast of the eye, and clothes the face with a frown that engenders hate in others. Good nature brightens the countenance, smooths the brow, washes out the wrinkles from the face, softens the heart, and makes all men love you. That is the meaning of this command of Jesus, to "love your enemies." Be charitable, but do not your alms before men to receive praise from them for your liberality; for there is no reward in your own conscience for such. There is nothing that receives such an insinuating, private criticism, as vain-glory, or self-laudation. The charity of such is always given with a grudge and leaves behind a sting that makes a person hate himself for his meanness.

Of all things, the Master disapproved most of hypocrisy and insincerity, especially in the matter of religion. When you pray, be sincere. Do not try to make men believe you are so very good by long prayers. Do not go into public places with long, wordy prayers, but when you pray, go into your closet, close the door and there pour out your soul unto God, and you will be heard and your prayers will be answered. Ask for spiritual things and spiritual blessings, for it is presumed that you will obtain that which you most need, by proper asking, and due exertion on your part.

God never digs potatoes, saws wood, runs the loom, or grinds the flour for any one; but with an honest purpose by your own proper effort you will obtain your daily bread. You will obtain forgiveness, in a spiritual sense, of your trespasses, if you forgive those who trespass against you; but you cannot and should not get forgiveness of your short-comings while you burden your own heart with grudges against others. First, clear your own door-yard before you demand a clearance of others. Do not go moping around the world, with a long face and a sad countenance, to make people believe you are religious. Jesus did not recommend such devotion, but rather that men wash their faces and be cheerful. Jesus especially deprecated the practice of placing one's whole efforts on money-making; while money is necessary, yet one's life should be tem-

pered with spiritual truths and a spiritual preparation for the life to come. For a man has only a short time to stay here, but a long time over there, and as this is the preparatory period of a man's existence, it is but prudent that he make proper preparation for the next life. Jesus taught, that a person should not forget his spiritual nature in his rush for worldly possessions, for they will soon be beyond his control.

Neither cast your pearls before swine; they will trample them under foot as worthless incumbrances; but take the richness of your soul with words of kindness to the hungry, to those who ask, and to them impart the beauties of the awaiting harvest for those who have economized their time here in the work of laying a foundation to build on in the future. Enter into the narrow way of living, supply the wants of the body with frugal modesty; but on the soul lavish the richness of thought and meditation that you may enjoy the hereafter without regrets for the time lost here in efforts to accumulate worthless trash of both body and mind. There are but few that take the narrow way because the broad road of pleasure that caters to the lusts of the flesh is so tempting and pressing that men yield to the demands of the flesh to the destruction of the joys of the soul. The flesh, like your old clothes, will be left behind while the spiritual man will step forward into a new field of life, with new clothes suited to his condition. Every act of life will

leave its impression; and woe, intensified with regret, awaits those who enter the other world smirched with debaucheries, wrongdoing, and crime. A person is known there by the fruit he brings with him; it is not those who say, "Lord, Lord," but those who have done the will of the Master by right living, who are rewarded. Empty professions and lip service have no promises awaiting them. There is no promise held out to worshippers; in every instance, it is to doers. It is what you do and not what you say, that counts in the life to come.

In the Sermon on the Mount is the promise which says, "Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be like unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded on the rock. And every one who heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be like unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house, and it fell and great was the fall thereof."

The rich man asked Jesus, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus said, "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; honor thy father and thy mother; and thou shalt love

thy neighbor as thyself." The young man said unto him, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?" And Jesus said, "If thou wilt be perfect go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have treasures in heaven, and come and follow me." Matt. xix. 16-24.

When the disciples rebuked those who brought little children that Jesus might touch them, he was displeased at them, and replied, "Suffer the little children to come unto me for of such is the kingdom of God." Mark. x, 13, 14.

What did Jesus mean? Was it that the kingdom of God was composed altogether of babies? No, but none could obtain the blessings of that exalted sphere where God is unless they were pure as the babe, for of such is his kingdom composed. There are different conditions in the other world—the highest, is that where God reigns in his being; the lowest, we will not contemplate. When the scribes tried to puzzle Jesus with questions they asked him, "Which is the first comandment of all?" And Jesus replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment, and the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Mark xii. 30, 31. That command is very much criticized, but it is perfectly consistent with our duties to our neighbors, which are to do unto

them that which we would like to have them do unto us under similar circumstances.

The condition in the other world is most graphically given by Jesus in the parable of the man who was traveling in a foreign country, and who on his return home received the different reports of his servants. He laid this down as the rule of men's measurement in the next world: "For every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath." It would seem a difficult task to take that from a man which he does not have. That reasoning applies to the material side of life, but Jesus was not talking about this side of life at all; his meaning was a spiritual one. If a person goes into the next world with no spirituality, but loaded down with iniquity, he is reckoned as an unprofitable servant, and is cast into outer darkness,— "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Then shall the king say to them on the right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And this is the service which gained for them that great reward, for the parable goes on to say, "For I was anhungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me." Then shall the righteous answer him saying,

“Lord when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? Or thirsty and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick or in prison and came unto thee?” And the king shall answer and say unto them, “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Then followed the curse on those who refused to administer unto the needy. The whole significance of this parable is that good works in the way of humanity is of saving grace in the next life. Or, if a man is a good citizen and does his duty here in relieving suffering as well as he can, he has nothing to fear on the other side of life.

ATONEMENT

The doctrine of the atonement is greatly misunderstood, and an undue stress is placed on the word that is unwarranted by the teachings of the Master. The Jews paid a price for their sins by offering cooked meats, bread, and wine to appease the wrath of the Lord, but the meat and bread were always eaten and the wine drunk by the priests who acted as the agents of the Lord in such matters. Jesus died to do away with the blood-offerings of the Jews and to impress on the world that they were unavailing at the throne of grace. Let us compare the Pauline

doctrine of the atonement with the old Jewish idea.

In the twenty-ninth chapter of Exodus, we read: "And this is the thing that thou shalt do to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock and two rams without blemish, and unleaven bread, and cakes unleavened mingled with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil: of fine wheaten flour shalt thou make them. And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bullock and two rams. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water. . . . And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock. And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. . . . But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp; it is a sin offering. Thou shalt also take one ram; . . . and thou shalt take his blood and sprinkle it round about upon the altar, and thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and wash the inwards of him, and his legs, and put them unto his pieces, and unto his head, and thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: it is a burnt offering before the Lord; it is a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord. Thou shalt kill the

other ram and take his blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of the right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about, . . . and thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering and the shoulder of the heave offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up, of the ram of the consecration, even of that which is for Aaron, and of that which is for his sons; . . . And thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and seethe his flesh in the holy place. And Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that is in the basket, by the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy. And if aught of the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning, then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire: it shall not be eaten, because it is holy. And thus shalt thou do unto Aaron, and to his sons, according to all things which I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate them. And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: . . . Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar: two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb

thou shalt offer at even; and with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shall do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savor, an offering made by fire unto the Lord. This shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord; where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office. And I will dwell among the children of Israel and be their God."

The book of Leviticus has many directions for the offerings of atonement to the Lord for the sins of the people. The book of Numbers has also rules for a drink offering to keep the Lord reconciled to the children of Israel. "And the drink-offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: . . . Strong wine to be poured unto the Lord for a drink offering. And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice

made by fire, of a sweet savor unto the Lord. And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof. This is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offerings. And in the beginnings of your months ye shall offer a burnt offering unto the Lord; two young bullocks, and one ram, seven lambs of the first year without spot; and three tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, for one bullock; and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil for one ram; and a several tenth deal of flour mingled with oil for a meat offering unto one lamb; for a burnt offering of a sweet savor, a sacrifice made by fire unto the Lord. And their drink offerings shall be half an hin of wine unto a bullock, and the third part of an hin unto a ram, and a fourth part of an hin unto a lamb: this is the burnt offering of every month throughout the months of the year." Numbers xxviii. 7-15.

Under certain circumstances they used a scape-goat to bear away the sins of the children of Israel into the wilderness, but in this ceremony the Lord had one goat, too. "And he [Aaron] shall take two goats and present them before the Lord at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the Lord, and the other

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lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the Lord's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the Lord, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness. And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: and the goat shall bear upon him all the iniquities unto a land not inhabited; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." Lev. xvi. 7-10, 21, 22.

However foolish the above may appear to us, the doctrine of the atonement of Jesus is derived from the scapegoat of the Israelites and their various offerings to appease the Lord. "Who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." I. Peter ii. 24. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin." I. John i. 7. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin." I. John iii. 5. Jesus came to do away with the old, heathenish practice of blood sacrifice to ap-

peace the wrath of God, and demolish the Aaronic priesthood and all these sacrifices under it.

Isaiah in his prophesy of Jesus portrayed most graphically his condition, and awakes in our hearts the saddest pity and warmest love for that man of sorrows, who sacrificed home, family, and the comforts of life, turning his back on the traditions and religion held sacred by his race, that he might bring light to the world and by that help the race. We admire him for his ability as a thinker, we adore him for his self-sacrificing nature, we love him because his love was unbounded and he first loved us. Of all the great and good men of the world, none was so perfectly developed in all the ennobling traits of manhood as was Jesus Christ, our Light and Master. May I live to see the mists that surround his purposes and works lifted, that men may see him as he was and appreciate him for his services to a sinking people in opening anew the gateway to a life beyond the tomb, where men are measured for what they are and receive what they fully deserve.

The prophetic picture of the coming of Jesus by Isaiah, made years before the advent of the "Man of Sorrow," is sublime in its sadness. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was abused for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." Isaiah liii. 3-12.

We will now quote what is said in the Gospels concerning the Atonement. There were two young men whose mother sought to get them an honored position in the other world, one to sit on the right hand and the other on the left of Jesus in the kingdom. This incensed the ten disciples, but in reply Jesus said, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant. Even so the Son of Man come not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt xx. 25-28.

At the last sad supper of the Lord with his disciples on earth, when their hearts were heavy with grief and sorrow, knowing that the night was coming on amid whose darkness their Lord, guide, instructor and Master would be taken from them, Jesus, as they were eating, took bread, and brake it, and blessed it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat, this is my body." And he took the cup, and he gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matt. xxvi. 26-28. Matthew is the only one of the Gospel writers who, in describing the last supper, mentions the taking of the cup for the remission of sins.

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On the same subject Mark says: "And as they were eating, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take ye: this is my body. And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave to them, and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many." Mark xiv. 22-24.

Luke gives it a little differently: "And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the apostles with him, and he said unto them: 'With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I say unto you, I will not eat it, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.' And he received a cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say unto you, I will not drink from henceforth of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God shall come.' And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.' And the cup, in like manner, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you.'" Luke xxii. 14-20.

Paul gives his version of the last supper as follows: "For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and

said, 'This is my body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of me.' In like manner also the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come.' " I. Cor. xi. 23-27.

A covenant is an agreement. The New Testament is called a new covenant; the covenant of the New Dispensation, as distinguished from the Old Dispensation. Covenants in ancient times were always sanctified and ratified by the shedding of blood and the making of a mutual vow for the keeping of the same. For instance, according to Homer, a covenant was made between the Greeks and Trojans; a lamb was slain, its throat was cut, and upon the pouring out of its blood, the following adjuration was entered into by the covenanting parties:

" All glorious Jove, and ye, the powers of heaven,
Whoso shall violate this contract first,
So be their blood, their children's and their own,
Poured out, as this libation, on the ground;
And let their wives bring forth to other men."
— Iliad, 1, 3, 298, 301.

Jesus spoke in parables. The eating of the bread of his body and drinking of his blood was used in a spiritual sense, not a literal. That is explained by Jesus himself when we was instruct-

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ing the Jews concerning his mission and spiritual power. In speaking of himself, he says, "I am the living bread, which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." This the Jews did not understand and even some of his disciples forsook him. On seeing this, Jesus explained, "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and life." John vi. 50-64.

We must divide the New Testament into two parts, that we may understand clearly the subject we are treating. One part consists of the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The other part is made up of the Pauline Gospels, or writings of Paul, which he claimed as HIS GOSPELS, and in considering them we must not confound the teachings of Paul with those of Jesus. "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's," is applicable to the writings of Paul and to the text of the four Gospels.

We must take the writings of Paul with some allowance, for he was illy prepared to reflect the true teachings of the Master in their purity and simplicity. Immediately, upon his conversion, he went away into Arabia, and he says, "I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days. But other of the

apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother. Then I came into Syria and Silicia, and I was still unknown by face unto the churches of Judea, which were in Christ. . . . Then after the space of fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem, with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revelation; and I laid before them the Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles but privately before them who were of repute lest by any means I should be running, or had run, in vain." Gal. i. 16; ii. 2.

Please note that Paul preached his gospel, and not the gospel of Jesus, claiming that he got it through revelation from Jesus Christ. Although this is the claim of Paul, must we be reconciled to it as having come from Jesus? The laws of nature never change whether they be spiritual or physical, and from my knowledge of spiritual laws, which I have been studying from a scientific, practical, and demonstrative standpoint for over a quarter of a century, I know that no man can tell from whom he gets a revelation. The spirit revelator may call himself by any name, and the medium through whom it is given must take what is given, with no possibility of finding out who the spirit really is who gives the information, or makes the revelation. In the case of Paul, I would rather suspect that the revelator was a Jew, who wished to tack some of the old Jewish tenets and dogmas onto the Christian faith, from the fact that in Paul, alone, we get

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the doctrine of vicarious atonement through blood. As he claims to be the author of his gospel, we should not load down the beautiful teachings of Jesus with unreasonable tenets on the say-so of this newly converted Jew, who was during all of his life an extremist. Listen to what he says, and then judge if he was not presumptuous and arrogant, pretending to teach the truths of the Master but putting in the place of the teachings of Jesus, his own gospels. "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man; NOR WAS I TAUGHT IT, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ. For ye have heard of my manner of life in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and made havoc of it: and I advanced in the Jews' religion beyond many of mine own age among my countrymen, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers. But when it was the good pleasure of God, who separated me even from my mother's womb, and called me through his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles; straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned into Damascus." Gal. i. 11-18.

Paul, being a converted Jew, in which faith he

was so ardent and vindictive against all nonconformists, may be expected to have much of his early convictions lingering by him in his after-life. To reconcile himself to his own conversion, he often injected his Jewish doctrines into his Christian teachings; to that end he holds on to the dogma of original sin and blood propitiations through sacrifice. In this, he runs athwart the teachings of Jesus, as given by John.

Paul says, "There is no distinction between Jew and Gentile; for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime." Romans III. 22-25:

Now turn to John, who says, "God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through him. He that believes on him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already; because he hath not believed on the name of the Only Begotten Son of God; AND THIS IS THE JUDGMENT: That Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, for their works are evil; for every one that doeth ill hateth the light and cometh not to the light, lest his works be reprov'd." John III. 16-21.

Again Paul says, "We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were en-

treating by us : we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf ; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." II. Cor. v. 20, 21.

"There is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without the law shall perish without the law : and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law ; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified (for when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these not having the law are the law unto themselves ; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them) ; in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, ACCORDING TO MY GOSPEL, by Jesus Christ." Romans ii. 11-16.

"Now to him that is able to establish you according to MY GOSPEL, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith : to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever." Romans xvi. 25-27.

In the above we are expressly informed that

Paul was not only presenting his gospel, but that God had revealed unto him a mystery which had been kept in silence through times eternal. Paul rather glories in the fact that he was preaching his own gospel, obtained by him through revelation, independent of the apostles of Christ; and that after his first visit to Jerusalem he did not go there again for fourteen years, as before stated.

"But from those who were reputed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth not man's person) they, I say, who were of repute imparted nothing to me: but contrariwise, when they saw that I had been intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision even as Peter with the gospel of the circumcision (for he that wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision wrought for me also unto the Gentiles): and when they perceived the grace that was given unto me, James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." Gal. ii. 6-9.

"For this cause, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,—if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward; how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other genera-

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tions was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." Eph. iii. 1-6.

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. iii. 13.

"For there is One God, one Mediator also between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." I. Tim. ii. 5, 6.

"We should live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world; looking for the blessed hope and looking for the appearing of our great God and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 12, 13, 14.

Paul was a theologian and sought to build up his own theology and to attach it to that of Jesus, rather than to glorify the Lord, who extended his work with all humility and meekness, not glorifying himself in any manner. Jesus kept his personnel in the background, making, at all times, his work prominent; Paul always making himself prominent. Paul was a very smart man and a very ambitious man, taking a leading and active part in all things he was concerned in.

His theology may be considered in two parts or divisions. In one part, he shows himself a log-

ical thinker, and in the other, a mystical confounder in the use of terms. He belonged to an age in which great thinkers dealt in abstract conceptions; which carried him, at times, to the very heart of the Gnostic teachings. While he was not a Gnostic, he adopted some of the philosophy of that sect without compromising his own. The same thing is observable of the Stoic philosophy; in some instances, that philosophy found favor with Paul. It must not be considered for a moment that the entire moral and practical philosophy of the New Testament was original with either Jesus or the apostles; wherever they found a truth that was applicable, whether of Jewish or Gentile origin, they used it. The fundamental principles of truth in moral, spiritual, or physical philosophies are alike applicable to all people under similar circumstances; of which fact Paul was keenly observant.

THE LAST SUPPER

The last supper of Jesus was the closing of the Jewish festival of the Passover and the introduction of the Eucharist. The Passover was celebrated in commemoration of the throwing off of Egyptian bondage and the introduction of the Israelites as an independent, separate nation. The last supper was the abolishment of Jewish sacrifice in commemoration of the Passover and the introduction of that sacrament which has been kept ever since by Christian believers, in remem-

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brance of the last sad gathering of Jesus with his disciples, where love was poured out upon their souls amidst the deepest sorrow that could befall the lowly Nazarene.

Entering on his ministry, the greatest the world has ever witnessed, he felt the load of sin and wrong upon it, which was his to penetrate, expose, and roll away, giving instead of the darkness of Jewish Theocracy, the light of life beyond the tomb. With those duties resting upon him as he walked the shores of Galilee in the throes of hunger, thirst, and poverty, without a home, with but few friends, and with enemies on every side, well might he exclaim, "The fowls of the air have their nests, the foxes their holes, but the Son of Man hath nowhere to lay his head."

Those were sorrows sad and heavy enough to crush any other being; but they were light indeed compared with the sorrow of that night when at that solemn feast Jesus sat with his twelve disciples around the table. While eleven of them were partaking of the feast with a feeling of reverence for the old Jewish custom, Jesus alone knew that before morning should rise upon the holy city of Jerusalem and the thousands of people gathered there in commemoration of the paschal feast, he would be in the hands of a fanatical mob and forced away to a prejudiced court, where he would hear the groundless accusations of perjured tongues, and the sentence of CRUCIFIXION passed upon him. But the saddest of all was the

knowledge that at that very moment, one of his disciples, one of his chosen, one who had shared the benedictions of love divine in his heart, and received the full confidence and fidelity of the Master had betrayed the trust reposed in him and had already entered in an agreement with those who thirsted for his blood; his, whose whole life was dedicated to their good, who knew no guile, and could do no wrong. To think that his life had been bargained away by one of his own disciples, one loved and trusted, one who now sat with him at the table and partook of the wine, typical of the blood of his Lord, and would eat of the bread of his body!

And Jesus wept.

Let us go with them to the garden on the Mount of Olives where so often has he sat watching the busy throng in Jerusalem and anticipating the joy of being able some day not far distant to impart to them knowledge of a better way of life and of the joys just beyond the cold river of mortal death. They had not proceeded far on their way when one dropped out to fulfill his contract of betrayal, leaving but eleven to follow the Master. The absent one was to impart to the waiting mob the whereabouts of their victim. O what subtlety, what craft on the one hand, and what sorrow on the other. For Jesus knew his every thought and action.

Jesus was a man with all the sensibilities of a highly nervous system; he knew the painful sen-

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sations of the penetrating nails in his hands and feet; he knew the sufferings of the cross: the cringing flesh, the trickling blood flowing from his veins; and he had ample opportunity to avoid it all by flight. But no! the cup was ready; though bitter the anguish, it was his mission to partake of it, that the old thrall of spiritual darkness might be dispelled, and coming ages realize the truth of a continued life. He had told them of this truth, but they would not believe. It was for him to make a demonstration, that they might know from an object lesson, presented to their comprehension through his death in an ignominious manner, and by the resurrection of his body and his material reappearance, as promised. All of this he knew was necessary though it took his life, now in the prime of useful manhood, to prove it.

But that night at the garden! Who can contemplate it in calmness! Our sorrow must mingle to some degree with his anguish and grief. Think of that lowly party as they slowly and silently crossed the brook Kedron with its murmuring waters. And the soft moon, in full-orbed beauty, hung over the scene. The trees of the garden of Gethsemane like sepulchral gnomes cast their long shadows across the pathway. The intense gloom and stillness was only broken by the whispering lips of Jesus, who said to his disciples, "Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder." "Come, Peter, and ye two sons of Zebedee," methinks he added, "go a little way with me." And he began,

to be sorrowful and very heavy. "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me." And going a little farther alone, he fell on his face, and with the dust of the ground mingled he his tears of grief, and in the heart throes of sorrow he prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Returning, he found Peter asleep, and he said, "What! Couldst ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Oh, what an hour! What a trial! In the midst of his anguish Jesus said to Peter, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Who but Jesus could have withstood such an ordeal? The spirit said yes, the flesh said no, and amid the conflict of the two elements of his nature, he went away again and prayed, saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." And he came back and found them asleep again. Imagine if you can, the environment of that lone soul in the silent night, as Jesus turned away from his sleeping watch to commune with the spirit of God. Coming again to his disciples and finding them still in deep sleep, his pensive eyes fell upon them in their slumbers and he murmured, "Sleep on and take your rest; behold the hour is at hand and the son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

VIII

JESUS SAW THEIR THOUGHTS

“And Jesus, seeing their thoughts, said, Why do you think evil in your hearts?” Matt. ix. 4.

This is a most wonderful declaration; one which we cannot pass by as a miracle; but it is a scientific fact which, if the world could understand, would greatly benefit the race.

It has become an established fact in the minds of psychic students that thoughts are material things, or substances of nature evolved from the battery of the individual brain, and that those thoughts can be seen by certain finely developed minds. Thoughts are not only seen by sensitives, but felt also. “And there entered a thought into them, which of them should be greater. But Jesus seeing the thoughts of their hearts took a child and seated him by his side.” Luke ix. 47.

Observe the wording closely and you will see the force of my argument. “And there entered a thought into them.” Logically, how could a thought enter into the minds of the disciples that was not in existence? We know to-day that thoughts are factors of nature which are drawn to the battery of the brain from the thought substance of the spiritual realm, and when the thought of “who should be greater” entered into

to be sorrowful and very heavy. "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with me." And going a little farther alone, he fell on his face, and with the dust of the ground mingled he his tears of grief, and in the heart throes of sorrow he prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

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O, what a reality filled the mind of Jesus then!

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While we cannot fully realize the awfulness of that dark hour in the garden of Gethsemane as Jesus stood alone with his sleeping Apostles about him awaiting the coming of the mob, we can reverently worship at his shrine of love and grow in strength as we grow in years.

THE ARREST OF JESUS

When Judas, the apostate, traitor, and ingrate, backed by a mob armed with staves and swords, came into the peaceful presence of Jesus, Jesus was of all the persons present the most calm and self-possessed. Seeing the tumult, one of the party of the disciples drew his sword and smote off the ear of one of the mob. With the calmness of a philosopher teaching a lesson to his pupils, Jesus commanded him to put up his sword, and seeing an opportunity to give a wholesome lesson to men, said "Put up again thy sword into its place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Then he turned to the mob and upbraided them for their show of violence, and to assure them that their pretensions of strength could avail nothing against him were it not that he was fulfilling his mission on earth in declaring his psychic powers and the availability of the invisible world, should he call upon spirit forces for aid, he said "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" But again

thinking of his mission, he said further, "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be."

In this lesson we have the authority of Jesus for angelic power when it is necessary to have that power invoked. If men would study that power, they would find that it is as available now as it was in the time of Jesus, if conditions are favorable and the mediator sufficiently cultured. One of the conditions is that to receive spiritual aid the suppliant must pray to the Father to send His angels to aid a sincere mind. Without prayer from a sincere, believing heart, there is no intervention of angelic power.

Comprehending the inevitable results flowing from the purposes of the mob, the disciples forsook Jesus and fled, leaving him in the hands of the power of wickedness. The mob laid hold of Jesus, as an unwilling culprit, and "led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled," Peter following afar off. Then came the mock trial; false and perjured witnesses testified against him, but with all their testimony could establish nothing to give the high priest even a semblance of cause for putting Jesus to death, which above all things they wished to do.

Caiaphas then took the case in hand and tried to question and cross-question Jesus to catch an expression that he could twist into a crime. After exhausting his arts of speech, he burst into a

passion, (for Jesus stood in meekness and silence, not making an objection or pretending to care for what they were saying,— he had already undergone his trial in the garden, where the weak flesh was conquered by the spirit, and he had given his consent to endure the coming suffering, “thus it must be,”) and exclaimed to him, “Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witness against thee?” But Jesus held his peace. Becoming more exasperated, the high priest exclaimed, “I abjure you by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God?” To this haughtiness the Master replied, “Thou hast said; nevertheless I say unto you, Henceforth ye shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.” That was a most terrible crime in the estimation of the high priest, who in his priestly rage tore his clothes saying, “He hath spoken blasphemy.”

It seems in those days, and it is somewhat so now, that the highest crime that a man can commit is to assert something on religious matters that the majority do not believe, and their belief is usually the result of the want of knowledge.

Then came the great commotion. “What think ye,” said the high priest to those waiting in thirst for the life of the Master. They answered and said, “He is worthy of death.” Then they commenced by spitting in his face, hitting him with their hands, buffeting him and taunting

him and making all manner of ado of his powers as a sensitive. "Prophecy unto us, thou Christ; who is he that struck thee?"

Poor self-deluded creatures, little knowledge had they of the laws governing spiritual discernment. It requires the calmest conditions and the most perfect surroundings to give spiritual manifestations. Perhaps Jesus could have named the roughs who spat in his face and buffeted him, had he desired to do so, and perhaps he could not for the tumult around him. It was then that Peter cursed and denied his Master. Then, of all persons, Jesus was in the hands of a mob, with no pitying eye or responsive heart; worse, in this respect, than at the cross, for his faithful mother and Mary were there weeping at the great wrong imposed upon an innocent man through religious fanaticism. But Jesus was not the only one who has suffered through ignorant fanaticism, but he is the only one who willingly gave up his life for the enlightenment of the people.

All night long they kept up their amusement of petty tortures of the Master. When morning came they bound him and led him away to Pilate, the Roman governor, for final disposition. There he stood before the governor, in fetters and humiliation, the most innocent of men and the greatest, in the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the smiles of God, of any man that has ever blessed the world by his life. "Art thou the king of the Jews?" asked Pilate. Jesus, neither affirming

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nor denying, meekly replied, "Thou sayest." "Hearest thou not the many things they witness against thee?" demanded Pilate; but Jesus answered not a word. At this Pilate was greatly surprised and finding nothing against him worthy of death, his idea was to release him. But the mob would not give ear to such a proposition. The life blood of the Master was what they were after, and nothing short of that would satisfy them. This is the only case, in the annals of history, where a high court, presided over by a dignitary of state, defiled the ermine of justice and delivered an innocent man, whom he had so adjudged, over to death to answer the demands of a mob.

Pilate found no blame in Jesus which would subject him to the extremes of death, and as it was his custom to release a prisoner at each festival of the passover, he asked the people whom they would have released,—Jesus or that notable criminal Barabbas. Being instructed by the high priest and scribes to call for the release of Barabbas, the crowd did so and demanded the crucifixion of Jesus. Being warned in a dream of the danger which Jesus was in, even the wife of Pilate sent word to the governor to have nothing to do in the way of inflicting wrong on Jesus, for he was a righteous man. Notwithstanding all this and the entire want of proof of any wrong in Jesus, the mad fanatics demanded his blood, for it had to be so.

Being unable to dissuade the people from their thirst for the life of the Master, and yielding to their demands, Pilate, in the face of the tumult, took water and washed his hands saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; see ye to it." The mob answered, "His blood be on us and on our children."

And the poor Jew has no country to-day which he can call his own, and sore has been his national afflictions. They took the blood of our Lord upon themselves and on their children, and have received and are receiving the results. To tempt the power of heaven is a dangerous experiment, as the Jews have already learned.

JESUS' JOURNEY TO THE CROSS

Let us now take with Christ his last journey from the mock court of Pilate to the Hill of Skulls (Golgotha), and contemplate the significance of that death march from the heart of the great city of Jerusalem to the little hillock of stone lying just north of the gates, where Jesus gave up his life to demonstrate a truth most vital in importance to the whole human race. The mere death of Jesus, as a man, was not of such great significance as to attract to that fact alone the attention of all the ages, for many good men had been crucified before him and many martyrs have died in their faith since his time, leaving only a mere trace of their unhappy fate. But in Jesus is sustained something more than the mere

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execution of a good, noble, innocent being ; in him was centered a great principle of nature, the force of which could not be learned or fathomed by any of the physical laws of nature known to man. The force centered in Jesus was of a spiritual nature, which alone could be fathomed through the laws of spirituality, which to that age was a dead letter.

This was more than an ordinary journey of a condemned man from a death-sentencing court to the place of execution. It was a journey from the sentence of death to the joys of life,—a journey that led through the gloom of the tomb to the sunlight of life eternal, a journey that led down through the valley of death into a new field of existence, where false witnesses and mock courts have no standing and men are known as they are and not as they pretend ; where Virtue has its own reward and Vice its accusing gnome ; where men are valued according to the deeds done in the body ; a journey made hideous by an ignorant, howling, vindictive, and vicious mob, a mob walking in darkness neath the weight of moral turpitude, not beholding the light of spiritual truths.

There are some things in the different records of this journey that are antagonistic to each other, which have been stumbling blocks in the eyes of the scrutinizing public that never have been explained to the satisfaction of the skeptical mind ; but to my mind no explanation is

needed for the earnest investigator after the crowning object of the life, acts, and purposes of the coming of Jesus are properly understood. Matthew, Mark, and Luke say that a man from Cyrene bore the cross of Jesus, while John says "bearing his own cross," he was taken to the place of execution. Now which is true? Did Jesus bear his own cross or was it born by a Cyrenian? The discrepancy can never be solved, and what if it is not? Suppose those men who wrote the Gospels made a mistake in this instance: that does not militate against the true mission and important work of Jesus.

We know that before his time an absolute, continued, spiritual existence as an individual entity was not taught or understood by the people. He imparted that truth to the world by his life and death. Let us keep those things before our minds and not lose ourselves in trying to explain inexplicable minor assertions of any of the writers of the New Testament. There are many things in the New Testament that are irreconcilable, and to attempt to inflict an honest mind with a forced harmony only enhances the infliction of error and drives them farther from the mark. Let the one truth that Jesus came as a spiritual light to the world be our supreme thought, and then those minor discrepancies need not concern us. Jesus lived, and in his life we have a noble example of perfect manhood, an example that we can follow with safety, an example that no other

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man has exhibited. Why not accept that life as a guide notwithstanding there may have been erroneous statements of physical things surrounding his doings while in earth activities.

We must admit that Jesus gave to the world the most convincing truths of a continued life after death, and informed us how to establish the facts of a future life, a question in which we are all concerned. Then why not study his spiritual life, without prejudice and without the spirit of fault-finding in our hearts? This is all for our own individual good and why should we become enemies to our own welfare in our studied endeavor to hunt out flaws in the phraseology of some one who lived and wrote two thousand years ago? In our study of the life of Jesus we should bear in mind that life is too short for every man to formulate a code of morals for himself, and he must look to others for a suitable code. Take the life of Jesus, and winnow the wheat from the chaff of the New Testament, and we can find no better morals or rules of life in any other code. Why not take it? We must all die. Can we find a more sublime death than the example left by Jesus? The last words he uttered were the most sublime prayer that ever fell from the lips of man. "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Is there any other life in all history that has given us greater or clearer proofs of a conscious life after death than that of Jesus? Then why

not take him as an example and learn from his life and death what our own destiny will be? This life is but a probationary state of our being. This body is but our earthly tabernacle; soon we shall lay it aside and enter into a new field of existence. Jesus has opened the gateway of knowledge to that life. Why not study it? Let us seek to find the truths that Jesus taught rather than the errors committed by those who wrote concerning him. Let us not try to make more of the writers of the New Testament than what they were. They were simply men, who wrote from their best understanding at the time. None of them wrote concerning the life and doings of Jesus until many years after his death. It is evident that a written history of his life was an afterthought, and that many unimportant errors were the result. But it is no fault of the Master, and we should not ignore our own well-being for the want of due diligence in the New Testament writers. They were, save Paul and Luke, an uncultured, honest, spiritual folk; they knew nothing but from observation of the physical sciences, and of course they shared the popular beliefs of the country, which crept into the woof and web of the sacred narrative to a more or less extent, owing to the subject of which they were treating. In many instances they indulged upon the credulity of the masses, which was necessary in those days, for the people were moved then in the trend of divine thought through ex-

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travagant narratives of extraordinary manifestations. Emotions controlled them more than than now; but it is too prevalent at this time to be creditable to the intellect.

THE RESURRECTION

The dogma of the resurrection is a kind of tradition from the old Jewish poets and prophets, in their fanciful indulgence in allegories to such an extent that the real subject was often obscured by the word picture they painted. Those old writers first applied it to the condition of the Israelites as a debauched and enslaved nation and the New Testament doctrine on that subject is second-hand hearsay from the Jews. Isaiah in his exuberance applied the term to the heathen gods whom they had been worshipping.

“O Lord, our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name; they are dead, they shall not live, they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. . . .

..... Thy dead men shall live together, with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust, for thy dew is on the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead. Isaiah xxvi. 14, 19. This is a kind of wild rhapsody that amuses the imagination but does not satisfy the mind as to any great fact the poet wished to express.

Let us now consult Ezekiel, who with all of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, except the very poor and helpless, were living in captivity under the Chaldeans, having been taken prisoners by Nebuchadnezzar and carried away into Babylon. In their deplorable condition Ezekiel was directed by the Lord to prophesy as to the Jews, and in his exuberant imagination he exclaims, "The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and sat me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and lo they were very dry. And he said again, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, ye shall live, and I will lay sinews upon you and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and ye shall live and ye shall know that I am the Lord." Ezekiel then relates the fact that he did see sinews and flesh and skin come upon the dry bones, but they had no breath and he prophesied again, and breath came into them and they lived. Then the Lord said unto Ezekiel, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say, Our bones are dried and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." The Lord said, "O my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel." And again he said, "I will

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make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be the king of them all and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all." Ezekiel xxxvii. 1-22.

Considering the dogma of the resurrection of the dead and wishing to ascertain its force and importance as a belief or doctrine we should go back to its origin as data to draw from. Daniel, in his prophetic description, gives it some impetus and character, which should be liberally construed and interpreted. It must be kept in mind that all prophecies are rather vagarish and unintelligible and to understand them we must ascertain what was in the mind of the prophet when he was giving his vision to the people and the subject he was prophesying about.

Daniel was a slave, having been carried into Babylon when very young. Being a precocious boy he gained the confidence and favor of the king, and was chosen to be about the king's court and became learned in all the wisdom of the Chaldeans, who were at that time greatly superior to any of the surrounding nations. He soon became distinguished at the Babylonish court, not only as a scholar but as an interpreter of dreams and visions. Surrounded with the opportunities afforded by the king's graces, he became acquainted with the conditions of neighboring nations and peoples, and prophesied as to

them as well as concerning his own nation.

In the eleventh chapter of the Book of Daniel may be found the most wonderful predictions as to the future of Persia, Egypt, Rome, Greece, and other nations, with a forecast of their corruptions, wars, and destinies. In his prophecy of the final delivery of the Israelites from captivity, he describes the great archangel Michael, who was always considered the guardian of the Jewish people, and he caused Daniel to prophesy, "And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time, and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book; and many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. xii. 1-2.

In further discussing the question of the resurrection, we will impress upon the minds of our readers that Jesus, in his prophecy of himself, expressed a spiritual truth dressed in language that satisfied the minds of his followers, who still clung to the idea of a bodily resurrection at some future day. In speaking of his death, Jesus said, "The Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men, and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall rise again." Matt. xvii. 23. This prophecy was literally fulfilled. That we may not appear absurd in this assertion,

let us first inquire, "Who was Jesus?" In answering the question, ninety-nine out of every one hundred would say, or imply, that the physical body of the Master that was standing before them, was the man. Most people look upon the physical as the real man, when it is not the man at all but the house in which the man lives. On this subject said Peter, "Yes, I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle to stir you up by putting you in remembrance of these things, knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle; even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown me."

II. Peter i. 15-21. The tabernacle or house in which Jesus lived was destroyed, the Jews did kill the physical Jesus; but the man, the spirit, they could not reach; he was beyond their power; and after the physical house of Jesus was destroyed, his spirit, or the real man, being disengaged from the encumbering earthly body did arise, and exhibited himself on many occasions to his followers and others.

That spiritual arising was considered a resurrection. Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment. John v. 28, 29. In this declaration the evangelist was speaking in the present tense and had reference to the crucifixion, when Jesus had cried again with a loud voice and

yielded up the ghost, and behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks were rent; and the graves were opened and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of their graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Matt. xxvii. 50-53.

In speaking to his disciples of his death and resurrection, Jesus said, "But after that I am risen I will go before you into Galilee." Mark xiv. 28. Did not Jesus, the morning of the third day after the crucifixion, appear unto weeping Mary? Did she not see two angels robed in white, one sitting at the head and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain? Turning around, did she not see Jesus, whom she took to be the gardener, and did not Jesus make himself known to her, but commanded her not to touch him, for he said unto her, "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father"? Then the same day, at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst of them. John xx. 11-20.

And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace be unto you." John xx. 26. After this Jesus showed himself to Simon Peter,

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Thomas, Nathaniel, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples, and ate a hearty supper of fish with them. He led them out as far as Bethany. He lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them he was parted from them and carried up into heaven.

Jesus walked with two of his disciples and conversed with them as they were going to the village of Emmaus, and on the morning of the resurrection a vision of angels told one of the women who went in search for him that he was alive; and as he sat at meat with them and after he took bread, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples, he then vanished out of their sight. Luke xxiv. Those manifestations of Jesus after his crucifixion were characterized by founders of the New Testament religion as a resurrection of the body of Jesus. In a spiritual sense they were correct; in a physical sense they were not, for flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Jesus appeared to those people as a materialized spirit, or in a materialized form, and it was nothing new; for spirits have been materializing and manifesting themselves to the world from ages too remote for history to grasp, and they are still materializing and appearing to the people who put themselves in the way for such manifestations.

We have express evidence that spirits manifest themselves to men, at proper times and under proper conditions, in every writer and prominent

personage who has left an imprint in the Bible from Genesis to Revelations. Not one has failed to give evidence of spiritual manifestations. They may, in some instances, use language different from that used by the people of this age, but the ideas are the same. It would be absurd to infer that during the whole of the existence of the human race, the spiritual side of life was kept from all save the Jews. They claimed to be the especial favorites of God; for that we have only their word. All other religious orders claim the same thing for themselves. We have passed the age of taking assertions for proof. Evidence is what a person says about a thing or subject under consideration; proof is the establishment of the fact. The fact of spirit return has been established by proofs in so many ways that we must deny the forces of our own senses, deny the Bible, deny history, deny the evidence of every nation on the globe and of every age and set ourselves up against them all, or concede the fact and take it as proven.

The first proof of materialization is when the Lord God walked through the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day. Adam and Eve had hidden themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden; and the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, "Where art thou?" Then followed the confession, the curse, and banishment from the garden; but taking compassion on them because of their nakedness,

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the Lord God made coats of skins and clothed them. Gen. iii. That story is inconsistent with the idea that the Infinite Creator indulged in such episodes. If the transaction occurred at all it must have been a transaction between Adam, Eve, and a spirit whom the author of the book called the "Lord God."

What can be said of the story of the "tower of Babel?" "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded." Can such ignorance be attributed to the Infinite? And again, he said, "Go to, let us go down there and confound their language that they may not understand one another's speech." Gen. xi. 5-8.

How about the story of the three men appearing to Abraham as he sat in his tent door in the heat of the day, whom Abraham addressed as "My Lord," who informed him of the fact that a child was to be born of Sarah and his name should be called Isaac. Were they men or spirits? They could not have been God, for there were three of them, and besides, the person here speaking was ignorant of the conditions in Sodom and Gomorrah, and had to go down and see for himself. This story is to be found in Gen. xviii.

Two angels appeared at Sodom at even, and Lot sat in the gate. Lot called them lords, took them to his house, washed their feet and kept them all night, making them a feast of unleavened bread, and they did eat. Then followed the story

of the mob and the destruction of Sodom and the four other cities of the valley. Gen. xix.

There appeared unto Moses in the wilderness of Mount Sinai an angel of the Lord in a flame of fire in a bush. Acts vii. 30. Many other instances of spirit manifestation are left unnoticed for the want of space. Did not the woman of Endor call up Samuel who had been dead for many years, and did not Saul converse with him? And for the disobedience of Saul, did not Samuel inform him that "The Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hands of the Philistines, and tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me." (I. Sam. xxviii.) Saul and his son Jonathan were killed in battle the following day, Jonathan by the hands of the enemy and Saul by his own hand. "Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me," said the materialized spirit of Samuel to Saul, and it was so. When Nebuchadnezzar was holding a drunken revel, came forth the fingers of a man's hand and wrote on the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw part of the hand that wrote. Dan. v. 5.

There is evidence that the term "resurrection" did not always mean the rising of the physical body after death, in the estimation of the writers of the New Testament, but was applied to the spiritual man rather than to the physical man. The spirit was considered by both the Old and the New Testament writers as the inner man. "Thus saith the Lord, which stretcheth forth

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the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." Zech. xii. 1.

When the impure spirit is gone out of the man it roves through parched deserts seeking a place of rest and finds it not; and then it says, "I will return to my house [the man], whence I came." Matt. xii. 43, 44. Jesus took Peter, James, and John, his brother, up into a high mountain and was transfigured before them, and behold there appeared Moses and Elias talking with him. Matt. xvii. 1-3. Moses was transfigured fifteen hundred years before that. Ex. xxxiii. 29. And Stephen was transfigured after this. Acts vi. 1-15. At the crucifixion, when life could no longer be associated with the physical, when the spirit was compelled to take its departure from the body, Jesus cried with a loud voice and "gave up the ghost." Matt. xxvii. 50. That is, the spirit departed, and his body was left a lifeless corpse.

Let us not be too opinionated as to our branch of religion; it is good enough and we must not claim too much. It is absurd to contend that Jesus was the first fruit of the grave; that he was the first one who had risen from the state of death to that of life. All religions are based on the fact of a future life and a superintending intelligence, which they call God, or some other name meaning the same thing.

Plato taught that man is a dual being, pos-

sessing both a physical body and soul, maintaining that the existence of the soul was not dependent on the physical body, that the body might die but the soul would live on; it is true Plato believed in reincarnation in its broadest sense. Socrates believed that he was constantly attended by spirits, which he called demons. Pythagoras believed in the separate existence of the soul from the body. Every poet and master of music since the "morning stars sang together" has left inspiring proofs of the immortality of man independent of the physical body.

In one sense of the word Jesus was the first fruits of the grave, and his spiritual ascension was the first resurrection. There were two prevailing religions in the Roman empire at that time. One was the Jewish religion and the other was Paganism, as it is usually called; but in reality it was the religion of philosophy, based on Polytheism, or plurality of Gods. The Jews were almost unknown to the civilized world in olden times and their religion was confined to the little country of Palestine, their nationality becoming a factor only after they had become a nation without a country. When the meek and lowly Nazarene commenced to preach and teach, it awoke great interest in the minds of all who heard him, for it was a new philosophy and a new religion. He founded no church, formulated no creed, but went about doing good, healing the sick, consoling those in trouble, impressing the

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doctrines of the brotherhood of man upon all and how to make this life ripen into a noble existence in the life to come. He was the first fruit of this new religion; the first one who was sacrificed to its truths at the behest of envious bigots who could only answer his beautiful teachings by taking his innocent life. The only answer that could ever be made to the philosophy of Jesus was the argument of force.

The spiritual resurrection of man has been proven in so many ways that we may say the question is settled forever,—settled because there have been so many witnesses testifying to the fact of a future life, with not one against it. I say, not one against it. And why is there not one witness to the contrary in this great age of disbelief? Because it is impossible to prove a negative. One affirmative witness of a fact is worth more than a thousand witnesses who do not know. There was a man once convicted of the larceny of a pig on the testimony of three witnesses who saw him steal it. When he was called up for sentence and asked if he had anything to say why sentence should not be passed on him for the crime, he said, Yes; there were only three witnesses who testified against him, and he could have produced fifty good men who would swear they never saw him do the deed!

No one can prove the non-existence of spirit life, while countless millions have had affirmative proofs of the fact. Agnosticism proves nothing.

Negations prove nothing. But affirmation furnishes the proofs of every fact susceptible of proof. Some say that a future life is not susceptible of proof. How do they know it is not? There is a large class of good meaning people who are wedded to negative assertions about spirits returning after death. How do they know it? Others says they do return and do communicate, under certain conditions, with people on this side of life. Which is the better authority, the man who knows or the man who does not know? We have the record of many witnesses who saw and conversed with the Master after his crucifixion. Who is able to say they did not?

The best evidence of a man's sincerity on any subject is the personal sacrifice he makes in the advocacy of his belief. No man will make a sacrifice of his life for a principle unless he believes he is right. The apostles of the Lord were witnesses of the acts, life and doings of Jesus, and as evidence of their sincerity they suffered death in advocating his cause. Bear in mind that was long before their religion became a power in the little country in which they lived. They gave their lives in proof that they saw our Lord and Master after his bodily death, and no man ever brought proof that they had no such experiences.

VIII

JESUS SAW THEIR THOUGHTS

"And Jesus, seeing their thoughts, said, Why do you think evil in your hearts?" Matt. ix. 4.

This is a most wonderful declaration; one which we cannot pass by as a miracle; but it is a scientific fact which, if the world could understand, would greatly benefit the race.

It has become an established fact in the minds of psychic students that thoughts are material things, or substances of nature evolved from the battery of the individual brain, and that those thoughts can be seen by certain finely developed minds. Thoughts are not only seen by sensitives, but felt also. "And there entered a thought into them, which of them should be greater. But Jesus seeing the thoughts of their hearts took a child and seated him by his side." Luke ix. 47.

Observe the wording closely and you will see the force of my argument. "And there entered a thought into them." Logically, how could a thought enter into the minds of the disciples that was not in existence? We know to-day that thoughts are factors of nature which are drawn to the battery of the brain from the thought substance of the spiritual realm, and when the thought of "who should be greater" entered into

their minds, Jesus, "seeing the thoughts of their hearts," spoke to them on the question they were secretly thinking about.

"But seeing their thoughts, he said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation, and house upon house shall fall." Luke xi. 17.

Paul was not a stranger to the working of the thoughts of men. He also recognized thoughts as working individualities, as things, in the minds of men. In his letter to the Romans he said, "Who show the works of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and THEIR THOUGHTS BETWEEN THEMSELVES ACCUSING OR ALSO DEFENDING ONE ANOTHER." Rom. ii. 15. He here recognized thoughts as things accusing or defending one another. If the brain sent forth thoughts as its own manufactured articles he would have used different language; he would have said of those who were working under or against the law that they, desiring to accuse or defend as their inclinations directed, sent forth the thoughts of their hearts accordingly.

From earliest times our greatest artists, in representing Jesus on canvas, present him with an aureola surrounding his head, radiance of which but speaks of the spiritual purity of the mind of the Master. The representation of the Master with a beautiful halo around his head was not a figment of the minds of the artists who

transmitted the features of Jesus to canvas; it was a real presentation to their minds of the mental emanations from the person and brain of that exalted personage.

From the brain of every person emanates his mental aura. If it be intellectual and spiritual it will be pure and radiant, representing the source from whence it came; if the mind be clouded with selfish and jealous thoughts, the character of the person will be of the same, and from that brain will arise an aura of a somber cast; if an individual is mercenary the emanations will be of a red cast; if he be beset with crime, dark will be his surroundings; all of which, a finely organized sensitive can see. Every phase of the human mind emits its peculiar aura; on the same principle that every flower emits its own peculiar aroma.

Thought is the architect of the man. Jesus could read the thoughts of men but did not know the physiological seat of them. He thought it came from the heart instead of the brain, knowledge which later science has developed. But that want of scientific knowledge must not be placed to the disparagement of our Lord; he came as a moral and social reformer, a spiritual adept, and founder of a great religion.

It is important in the investigations of all subjects to start with a firm foundation and on that build the structure. Before we start to building the superstructure of the "how" of thinking, let us ascertain the source of thought. Where do

thoughts come from? What are they when expressed?

Aristotle was the father of metaphysics, which comprehends according to his philosophy the science of being, the science of first principles, and the science of God. If the science of being and the science of first principles can be explained according to natural laws, then the science of God is natural and may be explained.

What is God? Is he above and beyond nature or is he the comprehension of nature? If he is above and beyond nature then he is not in harmony with nature. If he is in harmony with nature then he must be of its nature, and if so, he is the comprehension of the whole of the universe. Aristotle, Kant, Bishop Berkeley, Roger Bacon, Jonathan Edwards, and a host of other metaphysicians class the mind and spirit as one and the same thing and make it an essence of God. Were they right or were they wrong?

Those great minds took God as a postulate, and mind as a part of his being, and treated him as self-conscious and absolute wisdom. Those attributes of God are issued out to man according to his needs, as occasion requires. According to their philosophy man is a dual being; his corporation is a physical entity; his mind or soul is another distinct part; the former is of the dust of the earth, the latter a part of God.

That school of philosophers go on the theory that truth can be obtained with regard to facts;

they look through the subjective to find all things and that subjective something they call God. "Because I am he is." "Because I am," presupposes a greater; that is beyond question. But does that proposition solve the mysteries of the greater?

The Ionic school of Greece sought to find through an objective philosophy an explanation of all things. The Eleatics divided nature into the finite and infinite, and maintained that it was not possible for the finite to comprehend the infinite; and therefore, to comprehend the universe all things should be resolved into the unity of the Infinite Being, and from that source reach out into pre-existing nature, and also fathom the infinitude of the future. This school has swayed the dominant speculations of men ever since, and the result is that most of our thinkers, in solving the problems of nature, start with God as a postulate and then attempt to reason all things into his absoluteness. This is what is termed subjective philosophy, or the art of reasoning from a postulate to the nature of things, in contradistinction to objective philosophy, which takes known objects and principles as its basis of investigations and through scientific tests and analytical observations and by deductive reasoning arrives at truth.

In objective philosophy the thinker rises from the particular to the universal, from the observation of the crude to an understanding of the re-

fined, from the material to the ethereal, from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from the simple to the complex. In this philosophy there are no postulates; the thinker starts with the known and from that reasons out the unknown. The subjective philosophers start with a postulate, the unknown, and from that reason themselves into mysticisms.

What do we know about thought? Where does it come from? Is it a thing, a something, or is it the result of the action of the brain? Let us take some known subjects and from that standpoint take a short step into the realms of esoteric nature.

We know that there is a force in nature we call electricity. How do we know that? Because we can harness it up and make it do many useful things for us; as for instance, we can make it transmit intelligence around the world in an instant of time. How is that done? By the application of certain instruments called batteries. Now we know of that force, but where does it come from? Did the batteries manufacture the fluid, or force? Do you not recognize the fact that electricity is an element of nature and that the batteries and appliances we use for its control are but instruments through which it demonstrates itself in some ways?

Steam is but an expression of a latent force in nature. It does not make itself, it emanates from a power behind it. Vapor rises upon the bosom

of the air, not of itself but by a power greater than it is; when it comes in contact with a cooling element it condenses and comes down in rain, snow, or hail. Every one of these and millions more are elements of nature behind which resides something greater than they.

On the same principle, thoughts did not make themselves, nor is the brain of man the mill that grinds them out; but it is the battery that digests them into human expression. Man is not the only intelligent expression of nature; every animal, tree, flower and vegetable product expresses their peculiar intelligence, and so does the mineral kingdom in all its multiplied forms. Do they manufacture their own intelligence and shape it to their own peculiar expressions? Do they come by chance and express themselves without law, order, or design? Or is there not a source from which they derive their peculiar virtues? Did you ever consider the sources of thought? If you have not, let me suggest that we derive certain classes of thought through our five senses; thus, prick your finger, pain ensues and thought is evolved; a beautiful landscape is brought to your notice—your optic nerve carries the shadow to the perceptive brain and thought is evolved through the medium of sight; come in contact with an offensive odor,—the olfactory nerves are excited and thought evolves from the scent. The same rule holds good through the process of hearing,—a concussion produces a

sound wave; that strikes the auditory nerves, you hear the sound and thought is produced. The same is true in regard to taste: sweets evolve pleasant sensations, acids unpleasant and corresponding thoughts are brought forth.

Are they all the sources of thought? Is there not a class of thoughts we call reason? What evolves that class of brain cerebrations? Do not ideas flash upon the mind with which we are unfamiliar? What causes that class of brain action? They arise from none of the five senses but seem to be independent of our nervous system so far as nervous impressions are concerned, but seem to be impressed from some source disconnected from the senses.

The power of thought is not confined to man alone, but runs through all animal nature. All classes, or species, have their own peculiar ways of thought expression. Some animals do not have all the five senses that man has. There are animals which only have the nerves of sensation developed; they can neither see nor hear, therefore their mind is limited to the other senses. Other animals have the nerves of sight developed and a corresponding addition to their powers of thought. "Animals," says Spencer, "in the natural order of being, are moved by their senses. One smells the odor of food; his impulses are to go and find it and satisfy his hunger; sight is developed; the appearance of an object excites fear," and so forth.

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Let us take one step lower in the order of nature and consider the vegetable world, learn its language as far as we can and see if we cannot gain something from even the tiny creeper that always twines its tendrils against the course of the sun.

Nature is always constructing and always tearing down; always aggregating life energies and producing death results. All plants, like animals, have their circulatory systems; both have ducts or pores for the passage of fluids; both build themselves from the inside out, by cellular duplication, by the absorption of nutriment; one, mainly through the stomach from food introduced therein; the other, from rootlets and leaves by food given through their circulatory channels; both inhale and exhale gases; both have electric and magnetic currents as factors of their beings; both possess atomic intelligence through their structures; even some plants have a slight nervous system if not mentality. Plants placed in a dark room invariably turn their heads towards the light. If a twining vine is planted near a tree or post, it goes to that object for support. This phenomenon, or mental sense is strikingly observable in the convulvus, a vine peculiar to India. Said a correspondent from that country, "One morning when I was sitting on the veranda at the hotel, I noticed the tendrils of a convulvus turning towards my limb. In a very short time they had actually entwined it. I then placed a pole

in reach of the vine but at least ten inches away from it, and the vine in a very short time turned towards the pole. And during one night's time the pole was entwined about with the tendrils of the vine."

Two trees may be planted in close proximity to each other; the more thrifty will grow straight up; the other will incline toward the open space, seemingly trying to get away from the other one without even being touched by its branches. Is this mentality, vegetable sense, atomic repulsion, or outside Deific care? It is certainly an intelligent manifestation which shows more of mentality than of mere chance.

Following the similarities of animal and vegetable life further, we find that both of them come from the cell and both cells are very nearly alike in appearance; both live, die, and are dissolved and go back to their original elements; both contain oxygen, carbon, and hydrogen but the animal contains other structural elements not in the vegetable. Both animal and vegetable expressive life commence with the protoplasm and in the first stages of expression are very similar; yet they soon diverge into wonderful fields of dissimilarity, though through the whole expression of life there are striking similarities.

The sap of the plant in the tree answers in its life-giving qualities to the blood of the animal, the circulation of which commences as soon as the germ swells into active life; the blood of

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the plant circulates through the system as the blood of the animal through the physical body of its being. Both of the circulating fluids are laden with constructing material and both distribute their loads in the proper places for the uses necessary. It is even claimed by some eminent botanists that some plants have the power of locomotion. Agardh observed that "under particular circumstances, the contents of the cells of certain water weeds, being set free, moved about with considerable velocity, which he called *zoosporis*."

Says Mr. Huxley, "At the present day, innumerable plants and free plant cells are known to pass the whole or the greater part of their lives in an active locomotive condition, in no wise distinguishable from that of one of the simpler animals; and while in this condition, their movements are to all appearances spontaneous; are as much the product of volition as those of such animals."

In the year 1837, Schwan & Schleiden founded the science of histology, or that branch of anatomy which treats of the ultimate visible structure of organisms. They discovered the important fact of the fundamental unity of animal and vegetable structure, and however diverse may be the fabrics or tissues of which their bodies are composed, the varied structure observed in them resulted from the change of cells, which in both animals and plants are similar when compared together. Mr. Huxley says, "It must be admitted

that plants may be contractile and locomotive; that, while locomotive, their movement may have as much appearance of spontaneity as those of the lowest animals, and that many exhibit actions comparable to those brought about by the agency of a nervous system in animals, and it must be allowed to be possible that further research may reveal the existence of something comparable to a nervous system in animals. So I know not where we can hope to find any absolute distinction between animals and plants, unless we turn to the modes of nutrition."

The seeming barriers between the animal and vegetable kingdoms were entirely broken down by the discovery of carnivorous plants, of which there are several kinds; among which is the Snow-dew (*drosera*), which preys upon insects. Also Venus' fly-trap (*dionsea muscipula*). These plants have a nervous system in their leaf structure and also digestive qualities. On their leaves are small sensitive filaments which stand out at right angles, and which are possessed of a quality that attracts insects. As soon as an insect touches one of the leaves, it at once contracts and encloses the unsuspecting fly in its maw, which secretes a kind of a fluid, and fulfills the office of the gastric juice in the stomach of animals, and digests the prey as food.

Darwin took a lot of snow-dew plants and proved beyond question their carnivorous nature. He supplied a part of them with a small quantity

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of roast beef, by laying the same in small bits on their leaves. Of the fed plants 69 per cent. more survived than of the unfed ones, and their stems weighed 41 per cent. more. The fed ones exceeded the starved ones by the number of their seeds 141 per cent. and the aggregate weight of their seeds 279 per cent. Harmon Munk, in experimenting with the same plant, found it possessed with electric currents and with electromotive corresponding to the latent stimulation of muscles and electronus of nerves in animals.

Huxley says, "There is every reason to believe that living animals always respire, and in respiring absorb oxygen and give off carbonic acid; but the green plant being exposed to the light of day or the electric light, the quantity of oxygen evolved in consequence of the decomposition of carbonic acid, by a special operation which green plants possess, exceeds that absorbed in the current respiratory process." The green power in plants is derived from the abundance of chlorophyl in their leaf structure.

It was ascertained by John Ray of Lancaster, and others, that there are certain animals which possess the vegetable functions of containing and utilizing plant chlorophyl, that they have the power; and the chlorophyl actually served to decompose carbonic acid, the same as plants; and that the same process attended and supported the life of these animals in the use of chlorophyl as in plant life. Plants inhale and exhale as animals.

The cuticle, in plants, is provided with a great number of oval holes, which Lindel calls breathing pores. They are always over the green pulp with several intercellular passages, and when open, the air has free access to the green pulp of the leaf. This answers the same to plants that lungs do to animals. There are two little oblong bladders placed parallel with each other; and having the power of contraction and expansion, they serve in their offices the same as the two lobes of the lungs in animals; they have the power of closing the pores in wet weather and opening them in dry; they act as the needs of the plant require. There is, what Mr. Huxley hints at, a kind of an independent kingdom between animal and vegetable life, which he calls "No Man's Land," a kind of a connecting link between the two kingdoms. He gives us evidence in verification of his position as follows: "So far as form is concerned, plants and animals are not separable, and in many cases it is a mere matter of convenience whether we call a given organism an animal or a plant. There is a living body called *Aethealium Speticum* which appears upon decaying vegetable substances; and, in one of its forms, is common upon the surface of tanpits. In this condition, it is to all intents and purposes a fungus, and formerly was always regarded as such; but the remarkable investigations of Le Bary have shown that in another condition the *Aethealium* is actually a locomotive creature and takes in solid matter upon which

apparently it feeds ; thus exhibiting the most characteristic features of animality." Mr. Huxley then asks, "Is this a plant? Or is it an animal? Or is it both? Or is it neither?"

Some decide in favor of the last supposition and establish an intermediate kingdom, a sort of biological "No Man's Land." In fact, the evidence is incontrovertible that, while plants belong to a separate division from the animal, there is a striking relation between them ; evidencing beyond a doubt, that in the evolution of matter from the simple to the complex, atomic affinity and natural chemistry built up the differences by adaptation, and not design. The learned Mr. Huxley is trying to build up a pet theory of evolution through environment, conditions, and the survival of the fittest, rather than recognizing in all nature an intelligence fitting every thing for its place in the universe. The Darwinian theory of evolution is that the higher manifestations of nature have grown out of the lower manifestations of life, without one particle of evidence to sustain his position. We admit that conditions may modify the nature of some animals and plants, and that in species the rule is the survival of the fittest, and that under certain manipulations some animals seem to have changed or modified their natures by their surroundings, breeding, and training ; but science has never pointed out one instance where one species of animals have changed their natures and grown into another species. Until

that is done the Darwinian theory of evolution must stand as a figment of a fertile imagination.

While evolution from a lower to a higher condition is a beautiful reality when applied to the moral and physical condition of a part of our race, yet in no case, in all the school of nature, have we learned that one species of animals has grown out of another. The monkey was always a monkey, the baboon a baboon, the bear a bear, the wolf a wolf, and man a man. There are gradations in the order of life brought about through atomic intelligence but never by the growth of one species out of another. The tendency of even cultivated nature is to return to its lower condition and not to the higher. If the cultivation of man's moral nature were neglected and his intellect allowed to remain untrained how long would it be before he would lapse into the state of savagery and contend with the beast for the mastery of the caves again?

Three simple gases, carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen, form all the woody structure of every tree, shrub, plant, in existence. The seeming difference in the fibrous substances of different vegetable growths is due to the different arrangements of the molecules that form the structures; and those molecules that build the fibers of all the different vegetable growths are always, for each plant, shrub, or tree, compounded just alike. Does all this order come by chance, by cultivation, by one thing growing out of another? Is

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there not a superintending intelligence in them all? Every manifestation of nature carries with it its own intelligence. That proposition is too plain for controversy. What is that diffusive intelligence? It is every where and in every thing, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal. Do you want to name it God? Then do so.

Nature possesses all of the forces of the universe and man is a part of the universe. Every part of the universe is accompanied and controlled by intelligences. The intelligences of nature are forces of nature on the same principle that electricity and magnetism are forces of nature. Man has manufactured certain instruments and charged them with certain elements or chemicals so they can convey thoughts by wireless telegraphy from place to place and from person to person; but to do that, the instruments at both extremes must be in accord.

Human thoughts are intelligences residing in nature, for it is said that no one has an independent thought, that every thought that comes from the mind of man has been thought over and over again by other minds. Mental telepathy, that is, the power of two minds to impress each other though they be far apart is an established fact. Thoughts are things most of which are made by picturing themselves on the mind. Eliminate from your imagination abstract reason, and see if you can think without the thought being a picture on your mentality. Can you do it?

Think of Mary picking daisies from the sward. Can you do it without seeing the girl, the sward, and the flowers? Can you think of a horse without the mental picture of the animal, or can you think of any other object without picturing the object itself? Did you ever speak of something to a friend to have that friend reply, "I was thinking of the same thing?"

I think I have demonstrated sufficiently that life and intelligence are factors of nature and on the same principle thoughts that are manifested through the battery of the brain belong to and are a part of nature. As an element they exist independently of man who is used simply as an instrument through which thoughts are manifested in the form of speech, gestures, actions, and the many ways by which human intelligences are expressed.

This brings us back to the first proposition: What is a thought? Answer: It is a property of nature which expresses itself through all animal existences but in a less demonstrative form in the vegetable kingdom, also reaching into the mineral kingdom (for minerals did not chance of themselves). On the same principle vegetation did not manufacture the intelligence that builds all the multiplied forms of vegetable life from three simple gases. Neither did all the various kinds of animals, birds, and beasts manufacture their own intelligences. Did the babe manufacture its first thought of mother? Did the brain

of Newton manufacture the thoughts that brought forth his *Principia*, the greatest mental effort of man? Digested thoughts come through the manifestations of the brain. The brains of all men are composed of the same materials. If that is true, and it is, or science is a liar and mental philosophy a cheat, and if it is also true that thoughts are manufactured by the brain of man, then the different brain machines, being composed alike, would manufacture the same kind of thoughts and use the same expressions.

The brain is that part of the central nervous axis which is contained in the cavity of the skull. It is divided and subdivided into a great many parts and subparts. The principal divisions are the Medulla oblongata, pons, cerebellum and cerebrum. There are also the right and left hemispheres, lobes, and convolutions, or folds. The divisions and convolutions are divided by fissures of more or less extent, differing in the forces or depressions in different individuals; as the weight, particular developments, and texture of the brain differ in different people; hence, different casts of minds.

The brain, according to the analysis of Vaque-
lin, consists of an emulsive mixture of albumen, fatty matter, and water, holding in solution saline and other matter common to it with other tissues.

The following table gives the result of his analysis:

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Albumen	7.00
Cerebral fat (elaine 0.70) (stearine, 4.53).....	5.23
Phosphorus	1.50
Osmazome	1.12
Acids, salts, sulphur.....	5.15
Water	80.00
	<hr/>
	100.00

The Medulla oblongata contains more cerebral fat but less albumen, osmazome, and water.

Premy's analysis confirmed that of Vaquelin's and showed the following proportions:

Albumen	7.00
Water	80.00
Fatty matter.....	5.00

He extracted from the fatty matter the following principles: 1. Cerebric acid, a white, granular, crystalline substance, containing no sulphur, a little phosphorus, 66 per cent. of carbon; 2. Oleo-phosphoric acid, separated from the cerebric by its solubility in ether, containing about 2 per cent. of phosphorus in the condition of phosphoric acid and combined with saline; 3. Cholesterine, the same as that obtained from bile; and traces of saline, margarine and fatty acids.

I assert that the brain element in all men is made of the same material and is the instrument through which the thought elements of nature

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manifest themselves. If all men's brains are alike, why do they not all think alike? We might answer that by asking another question. If all magnetic batteries are alike why do they not send all messages alike? The answer to both is: Because the powers manifesting the different intelligences are different agencies. To be plainer, the brain of man is a battery through which thought fluids are transmitted in intelligent forms to enable men to communicate with each other, and that enables the race to take care of itself.

We have demonstrated that there is a universal intelligence or universal thought element, as there is universal electricity. The brain is the instrument through which a degree of that intelligence manifests itself. As that brain instrument is trained and developed, so does that intelligence or thought-force act through it. If one brain is schooled to the digestion of criminal thoughts, the man will think of criminal things and be a criminal, for a man is as he thinks. If he keeps his mind on ennobling thoughts, he will act nobly and be a noble man. The brain instrument of Jesus was receptive to the great thought waves that pass from brain to brain, hence he could read the thoughts of men as many people can do in this age, and as has been done in all ages and among all spiritually trained minds.

There are many ways of impressing the brain instrument of man with living thoughts. In the first place let us remember it is the spirit which

thinks and not the flesh. The spirit that is within an individual may receive thoughts within and of itself, for no man can think of a thing that has no reality behind it, or behind the thought. Or thoughts may be impressed through some or all of the five senses, or by human agencies, or by outside spiritual agencies, for men are always in company. No man is ever alone. Silently by his side is a walking spirit always keeping vigil over him whether he is asleep or awake. Those attending spirits are attracted to him by his thoughts and the manner of his life, and they to a great measure mold his conduct and give cast to his character. Spirits talk with each other and communicate intelligences. The spirit in a man in this sphere of life is constantly giving out intelligences to spirits in the next condition of life and spirits of the next condition of life often impress the spirit in the body of mortal man. Men should be as careful in selecting the spirits about them as they are in choosing earth associates.

The Jews were governed, while they were as one sect, by what their prophets and high priests said; but in time, like all other people who are fed on speculative religion, they divided themselves into sects. The rich and opulent Jews did not believe in a future existence; they were called Sadducees. The Pharisees, of which sect Paul was a member, believed in a life after death. While the Essenes, of which sect Jesus was a

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member (if he was not actually enrolled as a member, he taught the same doctrine and impressed the same morality on the minds of his followers), believed that the body is corruptible, and that the matter of which the body is composed is not permanent but that the souls of men are immortal and live forever. Josephus was a Pharisee, which sect had all the intolerance of bigotry, and those who did not believe as they did, or as they would have them, were to suffer eternal punishment.

The religion of olden times was built on the theory that the chief duty of man was to serve God; some in one way and some in another; if the service was not of the prescribed form, the delinquent incurred the personal displeasure of God and dire consequences were the result; but the later conception is that "he who serves man the best serves God the best," and the highest type of religion is that of humanity. It has taken thousands of years to get the people out of the idea of the punishments of God and into the better conception of becoming like God in kindness, goodness, pity, charity, love, and doing no harm that will require a forgiveness.

Had the Master and the apostles at once ignored all the fallacies of the people of their age, their teachings would never have been heard of by the world, and we would to-day be floundering along in the streams of life as they did in the Dark Ages, when the weak were the prey of the

strong, and death marked the man who had a thought that reached beyond the Vatican of Rome.

The advanced thinkers and the great reformers of the world could only make gradual impressions on the minds of the people, and many a stake has illuminated the face of heaven with those martyrs to human progress. We are not out from under the cloud yet, but that time is coming, with each one doing a little good; in time the sun of the true and undefiled religion before God, which consists in visiting the widow and orphan in their afflictions, in ministering to the sick, burying the dead, and keeping one's self unspotted from the world, will shine. It will not be long until the Christian religion will be a religion of common sense. When that day shall arrive the masses will be enrolled on the list of Christian followers.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

THE NEW TESTAMENT

Sorry is the task of anyone who attempts to write the life of the Master, from the fact that it is so shrouded in the mystery thrown around it by the many, many books relating to him that flooded the country at the time our present Canonical Gospels were being produced. For a candid mind it is difficult to say if there ever was a true life of Jesus written. Let those who pick up the New Testament with reverential care as the only true revelation from God as expository of his will concerning his Son, take into consideration that our present New Testament writings have been culled from time to time out of a mass of Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses to no less a number than one hundred and forty-six, and that the culling was done by different persons according to their conceptions of what was revealed history and what was not, a part of which was done hundreds of years after the commencement of our era.

Do not condemn, but consider that those multifarious writings are the strongest proofs we could have of the genuineness, sublimity and grandeur of the mission of Jesus. The twenty-seven books that we have of the New Testament

might be forgeries if standing alone and unsupported, but it is incredible to suppose that one hundred and forty-six different writers at different places and at different times, would all commit forgeries to build up a myth, or found a philosophy that met with no other approval than that of martyrdom.

While we may regret that bold and selfish men have assumed to abridge, cull, and reject such a large mass of books and writings relating to Jesus, thereby denying us the right to read and select for ourselves as we do concerning other men and events, they, with all their cunning and manipulation, have not been strong enough to dim the lustre of Jesus.

I take the following list of the lost Apocryphal books from "The New Testament Apocrypha," by Rev. William Heber Wright, as an appendix to the Bible, under the title of "Bible Readers' Aids." He only claims this to be a partial list of the Apocrypha of the New Testament.

1. History of Joseph The Carpenter.
2. Gospel of Nicodemus.
3. Gospel of Peter. This Gospel was discovered in a tomb in Egypt in the year 1886 and published in 1902.
4. The Assumption of Mary.
5. Correspondence between Abgar, King of Edessa, and Jesus.
6. The Story of Veronica.

7. The Giving up of Pilate.
 8. The Death of Pilate.
 9. The Narrative of Joseph of Arimathea.
 10. The Saviour's Revenge.
 11. Clement of Alexandria, in the third century, and other writers, have preserved fragments of the so-called Apocalypse of Peter.
 12. The Apocalypse of Paul is a description of what that apostle saw and heard when caught up into the third heaven. (II Cor. 12.)
 13. Among the epistolary writings is the Epistle of Barnabas. The original Greek text forms a portion of that celebrated Sinaitic MS. discovered by Tichendorf in 1859.
 14. The Epistle of Clement. The writer in this epistle incidentally alludes to the martyrdom of Paul at Rome and of Peter, but does not give the place of Peter's execution.
 15. There was also a second epistle of Clement, or at least an epistle attributed to him.
 16. An epistle under the title of "Shepherd of Hermas."
 17. The Didache of the twelve Apostles.
- The following list of lost Apocryphal books I take from "The Apocryphal Books of the New Testament" of 1901.

A

18. THE ACTS OF ANDREW. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3 c. 25. Philastr. Hæres. 87. Epiphani. Hæres. 47 § 1. Hæres. 61 § 1. et Hæres.*

63, § 2. *Gelas. in Decret. apud. Concil. Sanct. tom. 4. p. 1260.*

19–20. Books under the name of ANDREW. *August. contr. Adversar. Leg. et l. c. 20. et Innocent I. Epis. 3 ad Exuper. Tholos. Episc. § 7.*

21. The Gospel of ANDREW. *Gelas. in Decret.*

22. A Gospel under the name of APELLES. *Hieron. Præfat. in Comment. in Matt.*

23. The Gospel according to the Twelve APOSTLES. *Origen. Homil. in Luc. i. 1. Ambros. Comment. in Luc. i. 1. et Hieron. Præfat. in Comment. in Matt.*

B

24. The Gospel of BARNABAS. *Gelas. in Decret.*

25. The Writings of BARTHOLOMEW the Apostle. *Dionys. Areopagit. de Theol. Myst. c. 1.*

26. The Gospel of BARTHOLOMEW. *Hieron. Catul. Script. Eccles. in Pantæn. et Præfat. in Comm. in Matt. Gelas. in Decret.*

27. The Gospel of BASILIDES. *Orig. in Luc. i. 1. Ambros. in Luc. i. 1. Hieron. Præfat. in Comm. in Matt.*

C

28. The Gospel of CERINTHUS. *Epiphan. Hæres. 51. § 7.*

29. The Revelation of CERINTHUS. *Caïas*

Presb. Rom. lib. Disput, apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccl.
l. 3. c. 28.

30. An Epistle of CHRIST to Peter and Paul.
August. de Consens. Evang. l. 1. c. 9. 19.

31. Some other Books under the name of
CHRIST. *Ibid.* c. 3.

32. An Epistle of CHRIST, produced by the
Manichees. *August. contr. Faust,* 1, 28. c. 4.

33. A Hymn, which CHRIST taught his dis-
ciples. *Epis. ad Ceret. Episc.*

E

34. The Gospel according to the EGYPTIANS.
Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 3. p. 452, 465. *Origen.*
in Luc. il l. Hieron. Præf. in Comm. in Matt.
Epiphan. Hæres. 62 § 2.

35. The Acts of the APOSTLES, made use of
by the EBIONITES. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 30. § 16.

36. The Gospel of the EBIONITES. *Ephan.*
Hæres. 30. § 13.

37. The Gospel of the ENCRATITES. *Epi-*
phan. Hæres. 46. 1.

38. The Gospel of EVE. *Epiphan. Hæres.*
26 § 2.

H

39. The Gospel according to the HEBREWS.
Hegesipp. lib. Comment. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl.
l. c. 22. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* l. 2. p. 380.
Origen. Tract. 8. *in Matt.* xix. 19. *et l. 2, Joan.*
p. 58. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 25, 27, *et 39.*
Jerome in many places, as above.

40. The Book of the HELKESAITES. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 6. c. 38.

41. The false Gospels of HESYCHIUS. *Hieron. Præfat. in Evang. ad Damas. Gelas. in Decret.*

J

42. The Book of JAMES. *Origen. Comm. in Matt.* xiii. 55, 56.

43. Books forged and published under the name of JAMES. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 30. § 23. *Innocent I. Epist. 3. ad Exuper. Tholos. Episc.* § 7.

44. The Acts of JOHN. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 25. *Athanas. in Synops.* § 76. *Philastr. Hæres.* 87. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 47. § 1. *August. contr. Advers. Leg.* l. 1. c. 20.

45–46. Books under the name of JOHN. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 30. § 23. *et Innocent I. ibid.*

47. A Gospel under the name of JUDE. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 38. § 1.

48. A Gospel under the name of JUDAS ISCA-RIOT. *Iren. advers. Hæres.* l. 1. c. 35.

49. The Acts of the Apostles by LEUCIUS. *August. lib. de Fide contr. Manich.* c. 38.

50. The Acts of the Apostles by LENTITUS. *August. de Act. cum Fælic. Manich.* l. 2. c. 6.

51. The Books of LENTITUS. *Gelas. in Decret.*

52. The Acts under the Apostles' name by LEONTIUS. *August. de Fide contr. Manich.* c. 5.

53. The Acts of the Apostles by LEUTHON. *Hieron. Epist. ad Chromat. et Heliodor.*

54. The false Gospels, published by LUCIANUS.
Hieron. Præfat. in Evang. ad Damas.

M

55. The Acts of the Apostles used by the MANICHEES. *August. lib. cont. Adimant Manich. c. 17.*

56. The Gospel of MARCION. *Tertull. adv. Marcion. lib. 4. c. 2. et 4. Epiphani. Hæres. 42 Præm.*

57. Books under the name of MATTHEW. *Epiphani. Hæres. 30. § 23.*

58. The Gospel of MATTHIAS. *Orig. Comm. in Luc. i. 1. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 25. Ambros. in Luc. i. 1. Hieron. Præfat. in Comment in Matt.*

59. The Traditions of MATTHIAS. *Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 2. p. 380. l. 3. p. 436. et l. 7. p. 748.*

60. A Book under the name of MATTHIAS. *Innocent I. ibid.*

61. The Gospel of MERINTHUS. *Epiphani. Hæres. 51. § 7.*

N

62. The Gospel according to the NAZARENES. See above concerning the Gospel according to the Hebrews.

P

63. The Acts. of PAUL and THECLA. *Tertull. de Baptism. c. 17. Hieron. Catal. Script. Eccl. in Luc. Gelas. in Decret.*

64. The Acts of PAUL. *Orig. de Princip.* l. 1. c. 2. et l. 21. in *Joan. tom. 2.* p. 298. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 3. et 25. *Philastr. Hæres.* 87.

65. The Preaching of PAUL (and PETER). *Lactant de Ver. Sap.* l. 4. c. 21. *Script. anonym. ad calcem Opp. Cypr.*, and, according to some, *Clem. Alex. Strom.* l. 6. p. 636.

66. A Book under the name of PAUL. *Cyprian. Epist.* 27.

67. The Revelation of Paul. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 38. § 2. *August. Tract.* 98. in *Joann. in fin. Gelas. in Decret.*

68. The Gospel of PERFECTION. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 26. § 2.

69. The Acts of PETER. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 3. *Athanas, in Synops. S. Scriptur.* § 75. *Philastr. Hæres.* 27. *Hieron. catal. Script. Eccl. in Petr.* *Epiphan. Hæres.* 30. § 15.

70. The Doctrine of PETER. *Orig. Præm. in lib. de Princip.*

71. The Gospel of PETER. *Scrip. lib. de Evang. Petri.*, apud. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 6. c. 13. *Tertull. adv. Marc.* l. 4. c. 5. *Orig. Comment. in Matt.* xiii. 55, 56, tom. i. p. 223. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 3. et 25. *Hieron. Catal. Script. Eccles. in Petr.*

72. The judgment of PETER. *Ruffin. Exposit. in Symbol. Apostol.* § 36. *Hieron. Catal. Script. Eccles. in Petr.*

73. The Preaching of PETER. *Heracl. apud. Orig.* l. 14. in *Joan. Clem. Alex. Strom.* l. 1. p.

357, l. 2. p. 890. l. 6. p. 635, 636, et 678. *Theodot. Byzant. in Excerpt.* p. 899. *ad calc. Opp. Clem. Alex. Lactant. de Ver. Sap.* l. 4. c. 21. *Euseb. Hist. Eccles.* l. 3. c. 3. et *Hieron. Catal. Script. Eccl. in Petr.*

74. The Revelation of PETER. *Clem. Alex. lib. Hypotypos, apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 6. c. 14. *Theodot. Byzant. in Excerpt.* p. 806, 807. *ad. calc. Opp. Clem. Alex. Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 3. c. 3. et 25. *Hieron Catal. Script. Eccl. in Petr.*

75. Books under the name of PETER. *Innocent. I. Epist. 3 ad Exuper. Tholos. Epist.* § 7.

76. The Acts of PHILIP. *Gelas. in Decret.*

77. The Gospel of PHILIP. *Epiphan. Hæres.* 26. § 13.

S

78. The Gospel of SCYTHIANUS. *Cyrril. Catech. v.*

1. § 22. et *Epiphan. Hæres.* 66. § 2.

79. The Acts of the Apostles by SELSUCUS. *Hieron. Epist. ad. Chromat. et Heliodor.*

80. The Revelation of STEPHEN. *Gelas. in Decret.*

T

81. The Gospel of TITAN. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 4. c. 29.

82. The Gospel of THADDAEUS. *Galas. in Decret.*

83. The Catholic Epistle of THEMISON the

Montanist. *Apollon. lib. cont. Cataphryg. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. 5. c. 18.

84. The Acts of THOMAS. *Epiphan. Hoeras.* 47. § 1. *et* 61. § 1.

85. *Athanas. in Synops. S. Script.* § 76. *et Galas. in Decret.*

86. The Gospel of THOMAS. *Orig. in Luc.* i. 1. *Euseb. Hist. Eccl.* l. c. 3. 25. *Cyroll. Catech.* IV. § 36. *et Catech.* VI. § 31. *Ambros. in Luc.* § i. 1. *Athan. in Synops. S. Script.* § 76. *Hieron. Prof. in Comment. in Matth. Gelas. in Decret.*

87, 88, 89, 90. Books under the name of THOMAS. *Innocent 1. Epist. 3. ad Exuper. Tholos. Episc.* § 7.

91. The Gospel of Truth made use of by the Valentinians. *Iren. adv. Hæres.* l. 3. c. 11.

V

92. The Gospel of VALENTINUS. *Tertull. de Proscript. adv. Hoerets.* c. 49.

From wrecks of the despoilers, who deemed it more expedient to destroy evidence which existed in the now lost writings concerning Jesus, than to tolerate their existence, we have twenty-three books, in the existing Apocrypha, as follows:

	CHAPTERS.
Mary	8
Protevangelion	16
I. Infancy	22

CHAPTERS.

II. Infancy	4
Christ and Abgarus	22
The Apostles' Creed	1
Laoniceans	1
Paul and Seneca	14
Paul and Thecla	12
I. Corinthians	23
II. Corinthians	4
Barnabas	15
Ephesians	4
Magnesians	4
Trallians	4
Romans	3
Philadelphians	3
Smyrnaeans	3
Polycarp	3
Philippians	4
I. Hermas — Vision	4
II. Hermas — Commands	12
III. Hermas Similitudes	10

Of those books Dr. Talmage wrote: "Christ was the joyous boy of the fields. We are not permitted to think that the shadows of Calvary darkened His pathway as a youth, and the Apocryphal Books of the New Testament show a great deal of the early life of Christ not to be found in the four Evangelists."

Long was the period of formation of the present New Testament books. It took almost six hundred years for the cullers of the many books

and writings concerning the life, teachings, nature, and philosophy of Jesus to settle down on what should be considered the standard, or canonical, books of the New Testament. The Rev. A. Plummer, D.D., Master of University College, Durham, has appended to the Bible the result of his learning on the "Canon of The New Testament," in which he says, in part: "The early history of the canon, both of the Old Testament and the New Testament, is involved in obscurity. We know but very little about the way in which the books of the New Testament were gradually collected into one volume. . . . St. Paul knows nothing of written Gospels, but appeals to tradition. (I. Cor. xv. 3.) Barnabas (A. D. 70-100) is the first to quote from the Gospels, with the formula, 'It is written.' Papias (A. D. 130) is the first to speak of 'books' from which the teachings of the Lord may be known. In Justin Martyr (140-160) the 'Memoirs of the Apostles' are primitive historical documents . . . which were read in the Sunday services of the church. . . . Justin shows no knowledge of a canon even of the Gospels."

The quotations which Justin made in many instances differ from the present Gospels. About this time (A. D. 70-100), Marcion formed a canon consisting of the Gospels of St. Luke, which were much abbreviated from what they are now, and ten epistles of Paul.

“Near the end to the close of the second century,” says Mr. Plummer, “the evidence becomes full, and the gradual formation of the canon is a process which is approaching completion.” During the first centuries of the Christian era, the churches were not all in accord as to the genuineness of some of the books then used by some and rejected by others. “It must be carefully noted that they had not quite the same New Testament that we have,” Mr. Plummer continues, “and that different parts of Christendom at that period had not quite the same New Testament that other parts had. Not only did some churches accept as authoritative certain books of our New Testament which other churches rejected or did not know, although they were afterwards accepted by all; but some churches accepted a few books, which two hundred years later were rejected by all. This want of unanimity respecting a portion of the books to be admitted to the New Testament is an unquestionable fact in the history of primitive Christianity, and at first sight we are inclined to lament it.

“Before the close of the sixth century, all questions respecting any of the present books had ceased and doubts were not revived until the Reformation. The books which were for a time regarded in some parts of Christendom as inspired, and treated as Scripture by being read in public worship and quoted as of authority, were principally the following: The Epistle of Barnabas,

The Epistle of Clement (with which an ancient homily became associated under the erroneous title of the Second Epistle of Clement), and the Shepherd of Hermas, with perhaps the Gospel according to the Hebrews and the Revelation of Peter."

Towards the end of the fourth century (A. D. 393), a council was held at Hippo and another at Carthage (A. D. 397), which collected the books of the New Testament and published a list which they deemed to be canonical. This list was in the next century generally accepted, and those books were the same that we have now.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON

By the canon of Scriptures is meant the books of the Bible as now accepted. There is the Old Testament canon and the New Testament canon. When the books of the New Testament were passed on and rendered authoritative among all the churches is a question not fully settled. The New Testament was a long while in process of formation, and when we go back into the days of early Christianity and acquaint ourselves with the perplexities that the promulgators of the new religion had to contend with as to what should be their written guides, we stand appalled and dumfounded.

We want to think and feel that our books of the New Testament are just what they were when coined in the minds of their authors, and that

when we open the New Testament we are living in the thoughts of the apostles and evangelists of old, who had no contending rivalries in the field of sacred writers; but facts to the contrary are too stubborn to allow us the felicity of such thoughts and we must deal with cold truths as we find them.

When either of the four Gospels was given to the world, we know not; it is certain that Paul knew nothing of such books during his ministry. The first intimation we have of any kind of written documents or books came from Barnabas, who was a cousin of St. Mark and a co-worker with Paul, and who wrote some time between the years A. D. 70 and 100. He casually says, "It is written." What writing he refers to we cannot tell. Papias, one of the earliest, if not the very earliest, of church writers (A. D. 150), made use of the word "books." What books we know not.

In no case is the title, "according to Matthew," "Mark," "Luke," "John," original. When or by whom the titles of the four gospels were placed at the head, as names of the respective books, we do not know. Neither do we know who wrote either of the Gospels, yet the general opinion is that the names of the authors are rightly placed at the head of the books. It is quite evident, however, from our sense of discrimination that either Matthew and Luke copied Mark's writings, or that Mark plagiarized from them, or that the three copied from some book unknown to us,

as they are alike in too many instances for all of them to be original.

Out of the twenty-seven books which form our New Testament there were twenty which were generally accepted by all of the churches, but the remaining seven were held in critical suspense for a long time. The four Gospels, Acts, the thirteen epistles of Paul, with I. John and I. Peter were universally accepted. The epistles of Paul were collected into one volume at an early date, and this collection was commonly called "the Apostle"; likewise the four Gospels were called "the Gospel," and with these two collections the Acts, I. Peter and I. John were soon associated. The book of Hebrews, James, II. Peter, II. and III. John, Jude, and Revelations were long held in abeyance and doubt. In those centuries there were many spurious gospels, and to cull the genuine from the counterfeits was a long and tedious task.

The learned Dr. Lardner is constrained to admit that "even as late as the middle of the sixteenth century, the canon of the New Testament had not been settled by any authority that was decisive and universally acknowledged; but Christian people were at liberty to judge for themselves concerning the genuineness of writings proposed to them as apostolical, and to determine according to evidence." Vol. iii. pages 54-56; Taylor's *Diegesis* 108.

Is Jesus to blame for the many opinions among

theologians of all ages as to what books should be taken as canonical, or which ones were unauthentic? Should a disagreement on these points disparage the true mission of Jesus? The facts that Jesus taught were fundamental factors of life, for the betterment of humanity, and the squabbings have always been for loaves and fishes and for personal ends; it is no wonder the people doubt. But yet the facts are alive, and the smiles of the Master are as pure and inviting beyond and above the clouds of doubt as they were when the young Galilean proclaimed that the "Ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." (Matt. iii. 10.) All of the contentions are being eliminated, the absurdities thrown off, and the crucial truth of life eternal is awakening the minds of the masses with renewed love for the one who died that we might know the truth which no power can destroy.

Does the sun shine any less brightly because of the Ptolemaic system of the universe, and the believers of the writers of the Old Testament that it revolved around the earth instead of the earth around the sun? Does it impede the flow of thought in the brain because the old prophets believed that the heart was the seat of thought? Did not the blood circulate through the system before the discovery of Harvey? Was not the earth round before Magellan made his great voyage? Will not a rose smell just as sweet by

“any other name?” Can a lie destroy a fact? Can envious, jealous bigots kill the flow of human sympathy and love by dissensions among themselves and their fabrications for selfish purposes? Suppose there were a thousand books instead of one hundred and forty-six written about Jesus, would the passage to the other condition of life be closed? Would his tears of sympathy for the poor and afflicted bear no fruit of love, if some one does say that life is a failure and Jesus a myth? The diamond shows not its full brilliancy until the outer rubbish is cleaned away. The night of darkness cannot obscure the bloom of day, nor the world of guilt escape the feast of sorrow.

Let us quit caviling about what other people have done, taught, or believed, and improve the present hour, live for the betterment of ourselves and the race, wrong no man, cultivate the principles of friendship, soothe the heart of sorrow, relieve distress, and welcome the future with clean hands.

WAS IT MATTHEW OR LEVI?

Our reverence for sacred authority can only be canonized into the heart with a fixedness that lives with us and becomes a part of our lives,—when we say to intelligent investigation, “stop before you commence to doubt.”

Was it Matthew or was it Levi that Jesus called from the receipt of custom? We are told

in Matthew: "And as Jesus passed from thence, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom; and he saith unto him, Follow me; and he rose up and followed him." (Matt. ix. 9.) Mark says it was Levi, in these words: "And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and he said unto him, Follow me; and he rose up and followed him." (Mark ii. 14.)

Luke uses this language: "And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican named Levi sitting at the receipt of custom; and he said unto him, Follow me; and he left all, rose up, and followed him." (Luke v. 27.) On which occasion Levi made a great feast and invited many guests; among them were Pharisees, apostles, and Jesus.

Do those discriminations disparage the estimation we should have of the Master? No; but it does lessen our esteem for the sacredness of the books as being the product of inspiration.

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

The first three books of the Gospels are called synoptic, because they are considered a kind of compendium of the books that preceded them. The heading of the book of Matthew shows that the man did not write the book that is headed by his name. The title is, "The Gospel According to Saint Matthew"; that is, the gospel as it was probably learned from the preaching of

Matthew. Had it been written by Matthew the language would have been different. If we concede that Matthew wrote that Gospel the proper analysis of the language would be, the "gospel according to Matthew written by Matthew," which would seem a little awkward, at least.

But that makes no difference; the book is here for what it is worth, that is, we must value it for what it contains and profit by all that is good therein. If there is anything in it we do not understand, or cannot explain, let it go, as we do other things we cannot subscribe to, and profit by the sunshine of truth that sparkles all through its pages.

The book of Matthew was written for the instruction and guidance of the Christian Jews, as is affirmed by Irenaeus, who wrote A. D. 180. His opinion is abundantly confirmed by the internal evidence of the Gospel itself. The Jews were sticklers for tradition, the Mosaic law, the prophets, and ancient beliefs. They looked for a Messiah, in the line of David, to come to their delivery. So Matthew starts out with a genealogy of Jesus, given in evidence that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and brings other evidence to show that Jesus was the fulfillment of the many prophecies of the Old Testament.

To fasten the point in their minds that Jesus was the promised Messiah, and that the Jews were his particular and chosen people, he makes Jesus say in his instructions to his disciples that they

“go not in the way of the Gentiles and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not ; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matt. x. 5, 6.) The Sermon on the Mount abounds in references to the Mosaic law. In short, the whole of the Gospel is Hebraic, the intention of which was to gently lead the Jews out of the old and into the new. Matthew was written for a special purpose, but the Jews were too much wedded to their gods to espouse a new philosophy or embrace a new religion.

THE BOOK OF MARK

The book of Mark comes to us better identified as to authorship than does that of Matthew. The evangelist's full name was John Mark. His conversion to Christianity was procured, probably, through Peter, who was a great friend of Mark's mother, Mary, at whose house the apostles often gathered for consultation and sometimes to avoid capture by their enemies. When Mark started out in the service of the Master he became acquainted with Paul, and they worked together for awhile ; but when the plan was laid for Paul and Barnabas to go into the cities they had visited before, Barnabas wanted Mark to accompany them, to which Paul objected. This created an estrangement between them, and the result was that Paul and Silas went through Syria and Cilicia while Barnabas and Mark went to Cyprus. But after the lapse of eight or nine years they

were found again in harmony and working together.

The Gospel according to Saint Mark was obtained, doubtless, from Peter. Peter was a favorite apostle of the Master, although he denied him when the extreme moment came; yet he sat afar off and witnessed his crucifixion and afterwards preached his Gospel, for which he, too, suffered death. Mark was a learned man, while Peter was uneducated and therefore needed an amanuensis; and it is a favorite opinion among scholars that Mark obtained his information principally from Peter for his book, which was, no doubt, the first of the four Gospels written.

One remarkable feature about the book of Mark is that there are only about twenty-four verses in his whole Gospel that are not contained in Matthew, or in Luke, or in both. In the narration of the passion it is certain that either Matthew copied from Mark, or Mark from Matthew. Passing that by, we do know, from our sense of discrimination, that either Matthew and Luke copied from Mark, or that Mark plagiarized from them, or that the three copied from some other book now unknown to us. While some of the early fathers of the church were of the opinion that Mark wrote his gospel at Alexandria, the riper opinion is that it was written at Rome. It is regrettable that so much of the New Testament is shrouded in mystery, considering the importance of the subject involved.

The book of Mark was written to reconcile the Romans and Gentiles to the new faith. So cautious was Mark on this point, and so desirous was he not to arouse the prejudices of the Romans anew against the religion of the Jews, for fear of the effects on the philosophy he was trying to establish, that he quotes only two passages from the Old Testament (Mark i. 2, 3). He makes no reference to the Mosaic law, gives no genealogy of Jesus, and simply presents him as a spiritual conqueror, doing wonders in physical manifestations, showing spirit powers and spirit return, demonstrating the futility of old dogmas by subjecting his own life to immolation on the cross for others.

The vividness of the pictures drawn by Mark of the new dispensation indicates most strongly that he drew his information of the works of the Master from an eyewitness, and so adroitly does he present them to the world that it must be conceded that he was a devout believer himself, and in presenting the facts contained in his book, he desired to retain the good opinion of those he wished to reach. While the manner of presentation in many instances is almost crude, yet there is a strength of expression that carries conviction. That strength of presentation shows him to have been an original thinker of great ability.

Biblical scholars who have made a study of the Gospels for the sole purpose of ascertaining

all facts surrounding them, tell us that the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark were not written by him, that he left his Gospel incomplete, and some unknown person added those twelve last verses to the last chapter. Those twelve verses have been the source of much criticism, and have given rise to regrets that they had ever been attached as the concluding paragraphs to his Gospel. But few have ever attested their belief in Mark by drinking "a deadly thing," lest it might harm them, notwithstanding Mark is made to say, "it shall not hurt them."

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

Saint Luke is accredited with the authorship of the third Gospel and also of The Acts of The Apostles. He was a Jew, born at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria. That city was celebrated for its schools and facilities for education. It was the opinion of some of the ancient fathers of the church that he was a manumitted slave, a position that would seem antagonistic to a high state of learning; but that kind of slavery was not like our African slavery, where education was prohibited as a dangerous thing to the best interests of ownership in chattel property.

Luke was a physician by profession, and it is thought that he was converted to Christianity by the preaching of Paul, from which preaching he obtained much of the material for his Gospel and the Acts; and by his association with Paul

he became familiar with the leading characters of the apostles and early proselytes and believers.

He was an honest expounder of the principles of the new religion, and in his writings he gave his best opinions and obtained facts concerning the things of which he wrote. While we are led to think, from the consensus of critics, that the three Synoptic Gospels were written by different persons, at different times and places, without any concurrence of design, yet there are internal evidences that each part, or book, was made to serve and complete a system for general use.

The book of Matthew was written to fit the Jewish idea of the promised Messiah, and to mellow the old Mosaic conception into a sweeter Gospel of peace and love. Mark wrote for the Romans and to soothe their asperities against the presentation of religious thought different from their own, when they saw all that was necessary in the Stoic philosophy. Luke addressed his Gospel to the consideration of the Gentiles generally.

Thus by the three all the prejudices and reasonable objections of the various classes with different views on religion might be met. The plan of salvation, as laid down in the Gospels, indicates a system of thought and concurrence of design that seem more than mere coincidence. Let us keep in mind that that system of philosophy which is called religion was not founded altogether for

the glory of God and the souls of men, but was originally a great political and business organization as well. It is not so much a political factor now as formerly, yet it is a mammoth business concern, the corner-stone of which is cemented in the credulity of the masses.

The leading principles of the three Synoptic Gospels were the concentration of power in the hands of the few, the head of whom was the pope of Rome. For seventeen hundred years European crowned heads depended upon the will of the pope for the security of their positions, and it would be so now were not his powers weakened by divisions in religious sentiment. Our Catholic friends place great stress on that passage in which Jesus said to Peter, "And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi. 18.) To build that church were the three Synoptic Gospels written.

Matthew tickled the vanity of the Jews by pretending to them that they were God's chosen people, and that Jesus regarded them as his especial favorites. Luke addressed himself more to the practical understanding of the Gentiles, to whom he went with his especial gospel. He did not claim an estrangement from the general philosophies of the day, but a kind of better graft on the stem of the old stock of religion, from which Jesus was presented as a descendant

direct from God through the channel of Adam. He did not claim to the Gentiles that he obtained the material out of which he wrote his Gospel from any source other than from hearsay and rumor. On this subject he says, "For as much as many have taken it in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seems good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of these things wherein thou hast been instructed." (Luke i. 1.)

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT JOHN

Let us be candid and freely admit that we neither know when, nor by whom, the fourth Gospel was written. The generally accepted opinion is that it was written some time between the years A. D. 80 and 95; but that is mere conjecture. If it was as late as A. D. 95, John must have been nearly one hundred years old when he wrote it. The weight of authority is that John was as old as, if not older than, Jesus, and Jesus was four years older than the accepted era makes him. We infer that John was as old as, if not older than, Jesus from the fact that he must have been a man and acquired a home be-

fore he was called as a disciple. After he became a disciple he had no time to accumulate property.

When Jesus was on the cross, he consigned the keeping of his mother to John, and she lived with him at Jerusalem during the remainder of her life. If John was of the same age as Jesus, or older, he was ninety-nine years old at the time the fourth Gospel was written, if it was written in the year 95. The weight of evidence is, however, that the Gospel according to John was not known at the time Justin Martyr wrote his *Apology*, in A. D. 140; it was first alluded to by Theophilus and Irenaeus not earlier than A. D. 180. It was an anonymous book; at least so secretly was the authorship kept that none of the early fathers knew its name, and it was along in the centuries of the Christian era before it was named, and then the name was placed at the head of the book without certain proof as to the authorship and by men whose names were kept from the public, as well as the time of the transaction.

This great secrecy might lead a skeptical mind to infer that the whole thing was gotten up by wily monks to conserve their own interests at a time when it was safer to conceal the name of the true author than to give it publicity; there was no genuine reason for John, if he was the author, to keep his name in the dark, for the book itself is certainly a literary production that anyone might well be proud of.

During the first and second centuries after Jesus, the Christian countries where the religion of Christ was being planted were flooded with gospels, books, epistles, and writings concerning the life, mission, and religion of Jesus, all of which claimed to be genuine, and of the many translations none, not even those we have, are what they were when first presented to the world. There have been so many translations, so many versions, and so many changes, that no one can tell what the originals were.

We have no right, under the laws of God or man, to stultify ourselves, or hold up a theory or dogma that our senses revolt at. One of the revolting features is the assertion that the whole of the Scripture canon comes to us through the inspiration of God. The Scriptures do not claim any such thing, and why should we, in the face of some of their extravagance, attempt to do so? Here is an example from John. In speaking of that wonderful draught of fishes and the final ascension of Jesus, the writer of the Gospel says: "This is the disciple which testified of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true, and there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written, every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." John xxi. 24, 25. Adam Clark, in his commentaries on the Bible, says, "It is, I think, very likely that these two verses were

added by some of the believers, at the time, as testimony to the truth of the preceding narration."

The ministry of Jesus, according to the Synoptic Gospels, extended but a little over one year and was confined generally to Galilee; John makes it almost three years, reckoning according to the Jewish Passover. See John ii. 13; vi. 4; xiii. 1.

There are learned critics who claim that "John, the beloved apostle of Jesus," was the author of not only the gospel of John, but the three epistles, John I., II., III., and also the book of Revelations. If that be true, then John was a wonderful mental magician, for the style of the books, except, perhaps, the first epistle of John and his Gospel are entirely different. A person may change his religion, politics, and mode of living, but his mannerisms in writing are discernible all through his life, if he is an author, even though he may wish to counterfeit his style.

The principal purpose of the writer of the book of the Gospel of John was doctrinal. It was from John that the doctrine of the Godhead was introduced into the Christian religion. It was on this book that the Bishop of Alexandria and Bishop Arias became divided. The interpretation thereof caused the rise of the Arian sect of Christians, which resulted in the death of Arias.

The Alexandrian branch of the church believed that Jesus was coeternal with God and assisted in the creation of the world and all things con-

tained in it. Arias taught that the being of Jesus commenced with his physical birth into the world. The Alexandrian doctrine sought to torture the being of Jesus into a God, equal in all things with the Creator of the universe. The difference of opinion grew out of the first five verses of the first chapter of John, which begins: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was nothing made that hath been made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not."

The book of John is simply a poem, with very obscure meanings in many instances. If there is any meaning at all to be attached to the opening of the Gospel of John, we must gather that meaning by the ordinary way of construing obscure passages. In all writings we get at the meaning of the author from the light of the subject he is writing about. John wove his best thoughts into prose poetry. He starts out with four principal divisions of his subject. He wrote from inspiration, as all poets do. His inspired meaning, no doubt, is, if possible, both scientific and sensible, but clothed in the drapery of the imagination.

Let us analyze that sentence according to Biblical doctrines. The Bible says, God created all

things. Now how did that creation come about? By His command. God did not make things as a carpenter makes a house, or a potter his vessel of clay, but he did it by the fiat of infinite intelligence. He said, "Let there be light; and there was light." That was the word of God, and that word was a principle of a force in nature expressed by the word, "Let there be light," and that principle of divine force was as eternal as God, because it is a part of God.

"In Him was life." Of course that is a self-evident proposition. All life is a factor of nature and consequently a part of God. "And the life was the light of men." What is the life of men? It is the spirit that lives in the physical house called the body. When that spirit takes its flight, the body is lifeless. The spirit is a principle of nature and is a part of God and of course eternal with him. "And the light shineth in the darkness and the darkness apprehended it not." There are many people who do not apprehend the spirit of light now, because they are in darkness,—the darkness of spiritual ignorance which leads into sin, sin into crime, and crime into utter darkness,—the darkness of the soul. Jesus taught the way of life and light, that "light that shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." The light of Jesus illumines the tomb and reveals the Flowers of Beauty on the Shores of Eternity.

We are taught to investigate all things and

hold fast to that which is good. This does not mean that we must be ruled by our emotions, but by our reason. Error never ripens into truth by age, and because interested men made a mistake two thousand years ago is no reason why we should venerate their blunders today. It is not irreverent for us to question things that other people tell us, though the fountain source is aged and comes from what men call sacred sources. There is but one thing sacred in earth or heaven, and that is Truth; and we have the right to suspect every thing that comes to us through the instrumentality of a hidden hand or covered by the veil of darkness.

If the New Testament is what it purports to be, there could be no cause for hiding its authorship, the date of its production, the language in which it was written, or the meaning of its terms; and while it is so shrouded in mystery we must be allowed to take it for what it is worth, as we do other mental and spiritual productions, and for nothing more. If that be sin, then condemn the Bible. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Isa. i. 18. "As Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled." Acts xxiv. 25. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." I. Pet. iii. 15. "The sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." Prov. xxvi. 16.

THE NEW TESTAMENT LANGUAGE

Adam Clark says that whether the Gospel of Matthew "was written originally in Hebrew or Greek is a question by which the most eminent critics have been greatly puzzled and divided."

The Book of Mark. The early fathers were of the opinion that the book of Mark was written in Latin, but the later opinion is it was written in Greek. Adam Clark, in his Commentaries on the Bible, says: "Critics are also divided concerning the language in which it (the book of Mark) was written and the people to whom it was written. Some have contended for a Latin original." That it was originally written in Greek is a point now acknowledged by almost all learned men.

The Gospel of Luke. The prevalent opinion is that the Gospel of Luke was written in Greek, for his efforts were to convert the Gentiles to the Christian faith. Opinions differ as to the place of writing; some think it was written at Alexandria, Egypt, but the most general opinion is that it was published at Achaia, Greece.

There seems to be an effort all through the course of the Gospels to conceal the "hand that made the feast," rather than to give those things that people generally look for that open publicity that satisfies.

The Gospel of John. The language in which the fourth Gospel was written is a matter of conjecture also. The opinion prevails that John

was born at Bethsaida and was consequently a Galilean. As he was the son of a fisherman, a class among whom education was not generally diffused, we may well presume that he wrote in his mother tongue, the Hebrew or the Aramaic. The first mention of John that we have any record of was by Theophilus in the latter part of the second century. But those early days of uncertainty leave us in doubt as to the language of the original Gospel.

The language of Jesus. This is as much a matter of conjecture as the language of the writers of the Gospels. It is not known whether the Master in his teachings spoke Greek or Aramaic. It is presumed, however, that he spoke his mother tongue, as most of his disciples were Galileans.

The Epistles of Paul. Paul was an educated Jew and could write in either the Greek or the Hebrew language; but as his letters were directed to different individuals and churches, it is presumed that he wrote in that language which they could respectively understand. His four great Epistles, the Corinthians, Galatians, and the Romans, were written in Greek; the other of his Epistles were probably written in Hebrew.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

In reading the history of this epistle, if such a thing be possible, through the mists thrown around it, we are struck with the apparent du-

plicity of the authors of the New Testament. There is no other personage, real or fictitious, that the wildest dreams might invent, that could safely carry the load that Jesus has borne for the last two thousand years. Any other character than that of our Master would long since have been buried from the minds of the masses. But the virtues and the mission of Jesus can never die; they are ingrained in the nature of men; they adjust the philosophy of duty with the glow of love; the realities of this life to the onward reach of the next. It is the helping hand of Jesus that raises the fallen, supports the tottering, guides the erring. The people want Him, the people love Him, and will rally to his standard, let whatever wind that wist to blow, whatever storm to howl, and dark Adversity impend his frowns: Jesus is both the anchor that holds the ship and the pilot that guides it to the haven of safety.

The epistle of James, in my estimation, is the most important production of the New Testament. It is in every way practical as applied to human life, religion, and man's duty to man; and yet it was considered spurious for a long time, and only admitted in the canon of the New Testament after many objections and trials.

No one knows the date of the letter, or who wrote it, or the language in which it was written. James, the brother of Jesus, is supposed by some to be the author, and I am inclined to think he was from the fact that the epistle accords with

the known life and teaching of the Master. It is commonplace, easily understood, and reaches to the very bottom of good sense. The author defines religion, and is the only one in the New Testament who does. His definition is in full accord with the practical religion that Jesus taught by example. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." James i. 26, 27.

The author of "Notes on Saint James" says: "There is scarcely doubt that the writer was James, the brother of the Lord. As the brother of the Lord he had been much in the society of Christ before he learned to believe on him, and this accounts for the numerous reminiscences of Christ's words which we find in his epistle, and seem to be independent of the reports of his words contained in the Gospels."

Here come more perplexities. "There were two disciples of our Lord who bore the name of James. One was the son of Zebedec, who was put to death by Herod Agrippa A. D. 44. The author of this epistle was James the Less, son of Alpheus." From "Note on Book of James." Adam Clark, in his commentaries on the Bible, says in his notes on James: "James, the son of Zebedee, called also James the elder, and James

the less, or little one, called the son of Alpheus, and brother of our Lord,—whether one of these, or if one of them, which, or whether one by the same name different from both, are points that cannot be satisfactorily determined. Michaelis, who has examined the subject with his usual ability, leaves the matter in doubt, but leans to the opinion that James, the son of Zebedee, was the author and that the epistle was written before any of those in the New Testament. Other great authorities ascribe it to James, called the brother of our Lord, who was president or bishop of the church in Jerusalem.”

There are many other great men who have risen to explain, but their explanations seem lost in their explications.

THE EPISTLES OF PETER

That Peter was a fisherman is conceded; that he was unlearned is also the prevailing opinion. It is the general opinion, also, that Mark was Peter's clerk and from Peter obtained the material for the Gospel of Mark, that Peter was the true author of the book of Mark, but from modesty did not allow his name to appear as author. Might not Mark have written the epistles of Peter also? The mechanical act of writing the epistles has nothing to do with their authorship. The first epistle of Peter was admitted early as canonical; the second epistle was controverted. Eusebius says, “Of the controverted books of the New

Testament, yet well known and approved by many, are that called the epistle of James, and that of Jude, and the second and third of John. And in another place, one epistle of Peter, the first, is universally received."

Peter was a Galilean and perhaps wrote his epistle in the Aramaic language. He was considered chief of the apostles, and a man of great power of thought and purpose, and firm in his convictions. He is the rock on which the Catholic church is founded. "And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Matt. xvi. 18.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JUDE

It is presumed that the epistle of Jude was written by one of the brothers of Jesus, called Judas. This epistle was not recognized as proper to be placed among the canonical writings of the New Testament,—not because of a question of its genuineness but of its weight, and in that opinion I most heartily concur. Were it not classed among the sacred writings of the New Testament, it would be passed by as literary trash not of sufficient importance, either as to facts or manner, to attract attention.

As Jude was one of the brothers of Jesus, it is presumed that he spoke and wrote in the language of the Master. The supposed date of this epistle, as given by different critics, runs all the

way from A. D. 64 to 80. Dr. Lardner places the date between 64 and 66; Davidson, before A. D. 70; Credner, A. D. 80. I confess that my mind is not convinced as to the language in which the New Testament was written. But what of it? The human race is concerned only in one thing, life and its affairs. Were it not to preserve life and secure its enjoyments, we would give no concern to the pressing present, receding past, or promising future; for there would be nothing gained one way or the other, with life running on and spending its course without a human effort. But we live now and must care for the present and the future, both of this life and the next.

So we must deal with facts, for we all have to confront them sooner or later, and nothing should have weight with us that is not of itself true, though it be dressed in the garb of ancient cult and classed as holy,—for that is holy only which is true.

WHEN WERE THE NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS WRITTEN?

When were the books of the New Testament written? This is a question that has never been answered, and probably never will be; except, perhaps, we can come nearer arriving at the dates of the writings of Paul than of any other of the apostles. It is worthy of observation that Paul was the first man who wrote anything about the

Master, and he may justly be considered the Father of the New Testament. Had it not been for Paul, we should likely never have been blessed with the New Testament, and without that, spiritual darkness would be hovering over the world and the depravity of man have no check.

Perhaps someone asks: What has Christianity done for the world? Are not the people as wicked now as they were when Greece gave her learning to men, and the Augustan reign smiled from the seven hills of Rome and blessed the world with its rule of justice? Were there more wars then than now? More murders, thieves, robbers, rapes, grafters, and monsters of human greed than now? No! I answer no! The devil still enthrones himself in the human heart and his excursions are as frequent, perhaps, as when Cæsar fought his battles in the daytime and wrote them up at night, or when Homer, blind to the external world, saw gods dethroning virtue and demigods ravaging the spoils of the despoiler; and the reason is that Jesus has been dethroned, except in name, and merchandise made of his blood by substituting creedalism for his truths and ritualism for his word. How long would the devil and his minions stand before the guns of Jesus, charged with his declaration of principles at his first public meeting in the city of his childhood, when he prefaced his services by reading from the book of Esaias. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me

to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke iv. 18, 19.

How long could evil stand before such a leader if his followers were loyal to his cause? When I use the word devil, I mean the spirit of wrong that actuates every degrading or criminal act which impels men on to vileness. I mean no harm in exposing the pious deviltries spread out before me, and were it not for the hope of good, my pen should rust and my ink dry in the horn, for I know that my name shall be tarnished and feelings crucified for what little good I hope to accomplish by exposing those pious frauds through which the people are innocently led astray and made to be their own worst enemies.

I know that if we would all follow the advice of James, who says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep himself unspotted from the world" (James i. 27), many fat ministers would lose the velvet that now softens their fingers above other men. But can we spare the knife and let the cancer kill the patient?

But to return to the comparison of the different dates assigned to the various books of the New Testament. I quote from three lists, taken from

three different editions of the Bible, one published by the National Publishing Company, one by the International Bible Agency, and one from the New Revision of the New Testament.

National Publishing Co.

	A.D.
Matthew	64
Mark	64
Luke	63 or 64
John	68
Acts	63 or 64
Romans	58
I. Corinthians	Feb. 58
II. Corinthians	57
Galatians	52 or beginning of 53
Ephesians	April 61
Philippians	62
Colossians	62
I. Thessalonians	52
II. Thessalonians	52
I. Timothy	56
II. Timothy	61
Titus	56
Philemon	62
Hebrews	63
James	61
I. Peter	64
II. Peter	64
I. John	80
II. John	90
III. John	Between 80 and 90
Jude	64 or 65
Revelations	95 or 96

International Bible Agency.

	A.D.
Matthew	60 to 70
Mark	67 to 70
Luke	60 to 70
John	80 to 95
Acts	62 to 70
Romans	57 or 58
I. Corinthians	Feb. 57
II. Corinthians	57
Galatians	57
Ephesians	April 63
Philippians	no date
Colossians	63
I. Thessalonians	52 or early 53
I. Thessalonians	58
I. Timothy	67 or 68
II. Timothy	67 or 68
Titus	66 or 67
Philemon	63
Hebrews	70
James	62 or 63
I. Peter	64
II. Peter	Just before his execution
I. John	85 to 95
II. John	85 to 95
III. John	85 to 95
Jude.....	Date not known or place it was written at
Revelations	95 or 96

New Revision of New Testament.

	A.D.
Matthew	39
Mark	43

	A.D.
Luke	56
John	56
Acts	63
Romans	57
I. Corinthians	Feb. 57
II. Corinthians	57
Galatians	56
Ephesians	April 56
Philippians	62
Colossians	62
I. Thessalonians	52
II. Thessalonians	52
I. Timothy	63
II. Timothy	63
Titus	63
Philemon	62
Hebrews	62
James	66
I. Peter	52
II. Peter	63
I. John	98
II John	98
III. John	98
Jude	66
Revelations	94

WHERE ARE THE ORIGINALS?

There are no original manuscripts of the New Testament in existence. The oldest Hebrew text now extant does not date earlier than the year 1000. The other manuscripts date no further back than the last half of the 4th century, and

none of those contain the whole of the New Testament. Jerome commenced a Latin translation of the New Testament in the year 385 and finished it in the year 405. He used the Hebrew manuscripts, Greek, Arabic, and the Syriac, and from them all produced the New Testament in Latin, which is the basis of the Vulgate. It is to be lamented that none of the manuscripts which Jerome used in the production of his Latin New Testament were subject to revision by any one else, as they disappeared after he used them. The Vulgate is the basis of the Catholic Bible.

The superstitious favored the LXX, as the edition of the Old Bible was called because it was asserted by the clerical Fathers in charge that that Bible was translated by seventy, or seventy-two, chosen men of God for that purpose. They were placed in separate cells, and the work placed in their hands, each man to make a translation as directed by God. After they had been seventy days in separate cells, each brought forth his work and the whole agreed in every particular and was therefore accepted as the WORD OF GOD.

Jerome's new translation had to struggle for a place, but after 200 or 300 years it found general favor and in time became popular among the western Christians. In the 9th century, by the aid and countenance of Charlemagne, Alcuin corrected Jerome's version by the Hebrew and Greek originals. Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, in the 11th century gave it another revision; and

all the churches of the western world rejoiced at the light that great mind shed upon it.

But the mother church, becoming grieved at the changes and revisions of the Vulgate, at the convention of Trent (1545) decreed that it would take particular charge of the work and have a new edition of the Vulgate made and that "it should be printed as accurately as possible." To give it the force of authenticity, two popes, Pius IV and V, undertook the task. The work was finished in 1590, and dubbed "Infallible." But it proved to be so imperfect that Gregory XIV called another assembly of scholars to make another revision. This time the duty was more thoroughly performed and this revision became the basis of other editions.

The first English version known is supposed to have been made in 1290. John De Wycliffe, sometimes called the "Morning Star of the Reformation in England," in the year 1390 completed a translation of the whole Bible in the English tongue. This, and his opposition to some of the practices and teachings of the Catholic church, drew upon him the displeasure of the pope, and although he escaped the stake during his life, forty years after his death the Council of Constance ordered his bones to be burnt and thrown into a brook. Fuller said of the event: "This brook has conveyed his ashes into the Avon, Avon into the Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean, and

thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblems of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all over the world."

Next comes Tyndale's version, and by this hangs a curious tale of diabolism under the false cloak of religion. William Tyndale was born in 1484, and was hanged and burnt at the stake Oct. 6th, 1536. He made a translation of the Scriptures. He was a Reformer and a friend to Martin Luther. In his time there was a law of Parliament against any kind of translation of the Scriptures. It was made a double crime to do so, such an offense being treason against the government and heresy against God. The penalty for treason was hanging, for heresy it was burning at the stake. Notwithstanding, Tyndale made a translation, for which he was arrested, tried, and found guilty. A gallows was erected, under which was made a fire. The condemned man was first taken upon the scaffold and hanged by the neck, but before death took place by strangulation the rope was cut and the body, half alive, was dropped into the fire below, where the penalty for heresy was meted out to him.

After this, in 1604, King James determined to have a perfect translation of the Bible into the English tongue. He appointed fifty-four learned men for the task, and instructed them what previous translations to use in the execution of their work, one of the translations mentioned in his list of authorities being Tyndale's version.

Miles Coverdale, a learned English bishop, took it into his head that the Bible was not just right, and he made a complete translation, concluding it in 1529. Afterwards, John Rogers translated what is known as "Matthew's Bible," which was a careful revision of both the Tyndale and Coverdale revisions. This was in 1537. In the year 1539, what was called the "Great Bible" appeared. It was called great because of its size, fifteen inches long and nine inches wide. It was a kind of compromise production, reconciling, if possible, the Catholics with the Reformation.

Then followed quickly Taverner's Bible, by Richard Taverner, which was a hasty revision of Tyndale's translation. This translation was under the patronage of Lord Cromwell, and it passed through several editions in the first few years. There seemed to be a mania for Bible making about that time. In the year 1540, the Great Bible was revised, called the Cranmer Bible, because Archbishop Cranmer wrote a prologue to the edition. The Bible was printed in London by Persian workmen, and through the influence of Cromwell it received the approbation of the king; but when Cromwell went down, Bishops Tunstall and Heath were put in charge of the work of new editions, and Cromwell's figure on the title page was removed and a blank left in its place.

In 1557 the Genevan New Testament made its appearance, which was probably the work of

William Whittingham, pastor of the English refugees. This was the first portion of the English Scripture divided into verse. John Calvin wrote the preface and many of the marginal notes. There were several persons engaged in the translation of the Genevan Bible, among whom were Whittingham, Coverdale, Gilby, Sampson, Cole and perhaps John Knox.

The Cranmer Bible proving unsatisfactory, Archbishop Parker of Canterbury, in the year 1565 distributed the Cranmer Bible among "able bishops and other learned men" for revision, subject, however, to his own decision. In the year 1568 the results of their labor were published, but a better revision appeared in 1572. This was known as the "Bishops' Bible." This was the Bible of the Established Church, while the Genevan was the Bible of the dissenters. The Reformation had created such a wide difference between the Reformers and the Catholics that they must each have a Bible of their own in sentiment and construction. Geneva was the place of refuge for the Protestants, and Rheims became the refuge for the English Catholics.

In 1582 the Catholics issued a New Testament translated into the English tongue, made from the authentic Latin. In 1609 the Old Testament, translated by Roman Catholics, was issued at Douay. These two versions to this day are the English standards in the Catholic church.

All the above versions preceded the King

James version. When James I was placed upon the throne of England, he found society divided up, and general discontent reigning everywhere. Religion seemed to be the most disturbing element among them. The Catholic forces having been overthrown a new schism sprang up between the Protestants, the Established Church party on the one side and the Puritans on the other. To satisfy them the king called a conference of leading men, that they might confer together and adjust matters so that harmony might prevail. During this conference, Dr. John Reynolds suggested that a new version of the Bible was exceedingly desirable because of the many errors in the Bible then in use. The suggestion led to the action that afterwards caused the king to appoint fifty-four learned men, with the instructions that they secure the assistance and help "and furtherance of all our principal learned men within our kingdom." This unbiased instruction secured to the king and the work the hearty cooperation of all parties. But it must be remembered that the king gave positive directions how the committee should proceed and what books they should use in their work.

The following are his instructions:

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishops' Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.
2. The names of the prophets and the holy

writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained, as near as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly used.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word *church*, not to be translated *congregation*.

4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used.

5. The division of chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down as shall serve for the fit reference of one Scripture to another.

8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters; and, having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinks good, all to meet together to confirm what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

9. As any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for his Majesty is very careful on this point.

10. If any company, upon the review of the

book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, to note the places, and therewithal to send their reasons; to which if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority to send to any learned man in the land for his judgment of such a place.

12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of the clergy, admonishing them of this translation.

13. The directors in each company to be the Deans of Westminster and Chester, for Westminster, and the king's professors in Hebrew and Greek in the two universities.

14. These translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible: Tyndale's, Coverdale's, Matthew's [Rogers'], Whitechurch's [Cranmer's], Geneva.

Three or four of the most ancient and grave divines, in either of the universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned to be overseers of the translation, for the better observation of the fourth rule.

Only forty-seven of the men appointed for this work are known to have engaged in it. These were divided into six companies, two of which met at Oxford, two at Cambridge, and two at Westminster. They were presided over several-

ly by the Dean of Westminster and by the two Hebrew Professors of the Universities.

This was called the Authorized Version of the Bible, and has been in use by Protestant Christians since 1611, and has been accepted as authoritative and correct by the masses, though critics have been assaulting its authenticity ever since it was issued. But the pulpit called it the "Infallible Word of God," and it had been the rule of faith for almost three hundred years. But criticism became too keen for the steadfast clergy, with the result that in February, 1870, the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, England, by a resolution adopted by both houses of the Province, undertook a revision of the Bible. Two companies were formed, one for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Old Testament and one for the New Testament. The work was commenced on the twenty-second day of June, 1870.

In a short time, by a resolution passed by both houses of the Convocation, the cooperation of American scholars was invited, and eventually two companies were formed in America for the purpose of acting with the two English companies. The work was brought to a close and the first edition of the New Testament printed Nov. 11th, 1880.

In this revision the Revisers, to give the appearance of faithfulness to the original texts, obliterated all the verses and chapters, but at

the same time made punctuation more pronounced than in any of the previous editions. It is well known that the original manuscripts had no punctuation marks, and if the Revisers were so punctilious as to chapters and versification of the Bible, so as to make a show of conforming to the originals, they ought to have finished the task by obliterating punctuation, for one is just as sensible as the other. They complain that there were 120,000 errors in the Authorized Version, but principally in the matter of punctuation. But how could there be errors in the original punctuation when there were no punctuation marks in the original manuscripts?

Of course we are all glad that they punctuated so well, but grieved that they destroyed the chapters and verses, for they were for the convenience of the public in reading and reference. It is too late now to be sticklers on the original manuscripts, for no one knows anything about them. They have been in the tomb of oblivion for over a thousand years, and the Bible has been tampered with, revised, translated, and re-revised by irresponsible parties, every one for selfish purposes, until now it puts honest conviction to shame for any one to pretend that our present Bible is a copy of the originals. All we can say, and all that is necessary to say, is that the Bible holds a place in the literature of our tongue, and no one can pretend to be educated without a fair knowledge of its contents. And no one can

deny in that book beauty of language, sublimity of thought, and the light of moral precepts that will lead any man aright if they be followed; but there is, withal, some very bad morals and detestable language.

BIBLICAL ERRORS

I quote from the Reviser's edition of the New Testament of 1881, page 54: "Concerning existing defects it may be said briefly, that the variations already detected and noted as existing in various manuscripts, versions, and editions amount to about 120,000. It is doubtful if any two editions of the Bible, as now published, are exactly alike. But of this large number of errors it is probable that at least 90,000 are of small importance."

From the Note by authors of the Revised New Testament I glean a few errors that they have exhumed in their researches in old editions of the Bible. Out of the many I have space for but a few.

In the Matthews Bible of 1551, in translating Psalms xci. 5, the Psalmist is made to say: "So that thou shalt not nede to be afraied for any buggs by night."

In the Genevan Bible of 1560, in rendering Gen. iii. 7, Moses has the credit of saying: "They sewed fig-leaves together and made themselves breeches." The Wycliffe Bible of 1382

had the same rendering. The Golden Legend made the same rendering.

The Bishops' Bible of 1568 says: "Is there no tryacle in Gilead?" The Douay Bible of 1610 has it: "Is there no *rosin* in Gilead?"

Cotton Mather tells of a Bible before 1702 in which David is made to say, in Psalm cxi. 161: "*Printers* have persecuted me without cause."

In an edition of the Authorized Version of 1653, I. Cor. vi. 9 was made to read: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall inherit the kingdom of God?"

In the Oxford Bible of 1804, Paul says, in Gal. v. 17: "For the flesh lusteth after the spirit."

In the Genevan Bible of 1562, the chapter heading of Luke xxi, reads: "Christ *condemeth* the poor widow."

In Matthew of the same edition, v. 9, in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is made to say: "Blessed are the place-makers, for they shall be called the children of God."

In the Authorized Version of Oxford, 1717, in the parable of the vine, Luke xx, the heading of the chapter is: "The parable of the vinegar."

In the Cambridge Bible of 1805, in Gal. iv. 29, is this: "Persecuted him that was born after the spirit to remain even so it is now."

In the Authorized Version of 1631, in giving the ten commandments, the third one reads: "Thou shalt commit adultery." The same render-

ing, a century later, in the German language, is found in the Lenox Library in New York.

In all the Bibles for the last hundreds of years the Lord's Prayer as rendered in our Old Bible has been kept up and every child in the land knows it, but the New Version has taken out its very vitals. The Old Bible says: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." The New Version says: "Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors." And "deliver us from the evil one," instead of from "evil." That beautiful ending, "And thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." has been omitted entirely in the Revised Version. Luke, in chapter 11., gives the Lord's Prayer somewhat differently.

Since about the 7th century this verse in I John v. 7 has been a prominent doctrinal authority on the Godhead, "For there are three that bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one." This verse is entirely eliminated in the Revised Version.

If anyone has a lingering doubt that the Bible is a scientific book from end to end, let him read the following, and then with a heart of contrition ask forgiveness for his want of discernment. I also take this from the Revised Version of the New Testament of 1881, page 116.

An Improved Version. In 1754 there was published in London, "Genesis. The first chapter by way of Essay towards an Interpretation of

the whole Pentateuch." Cotton quotes from the "Gentleman's Magazine" for August, 1754, the following as a specimen:

"1. *Ælohim*, beginning, created *lucid* and *illucid* matter. 2. And the *illucid*, void of co-adjunct cohesion, was unmodified, and distinguishableness was no where upon the face of *chaos*; And the *Ruach* of *Ælohim* emanated over the periphery of the fluctuation. 3. Until *Ælohim* said that *Æther* should coalesce to the production of light. 4. And *Ælohim* saw the light was good, when it was become a separation from obscurity. 5. And *Ælohim* deemed *this* day-light, and the obscurity was yet as night, which was light, and obscuration the consummation of the first day." Amen.

THE EARLY GODS

In going back in our imaginations to the days of ancient knowledge, we must view men as they were,— from their standpoint, and not from ours. We are a different people and resemble the ancient Israelites only in our physical make-up. We are not like them in thought, morals, education, refinement, society, government, laws, language, or religion. They were a hardy, crude, pastoral class. They could not, until well along in their advancement as a people, either read or write, and then the priests alone enjoyed those accomplishments. The masses were ignorant, superstitious, and warlike in nature. They knew nothing of the physical divisions of the surface of the earth, nor of its conformation. They were ignorant of the physical sciences and of the rules of civil government. They were governed through the forces of religion acting on their emotions and credulity. They knew that there were invisible powers, which under certain conditions influenced men in this life. The secrets of obtaining this information were confined to the keeping of the high priests, prophets, and afterwards the apostles. Those invisible powers they called gods we call spirits. From this source came the gods of the Bible.

The first three Gospels of the New Testament

do not command us to worship. They do not make worship an act of saving ordinance. In fact, Jesus circumscribed it to a spiritual act and not to a physical manifestation.

When the woman met Jesus at the well, she said unto him, "Our Fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said unto her, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews; but the hour cometh and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John iv. 20-24.

Jesus here spoke of the god of the Jews, which we can do well to take up and investigate as a principle. Jesus used no idle words in his instructions to his followers.

Every god that has made a manifestation to man, mentioned in the Bible, has done so as an individual power, for a particular purpose, at a particular time, to a particular people. Those gods gave orders to their subordinates of this life and often talked to men, face to face, as one man talks to another. They appeared in many ways to the Jewish people; sometimes in material forms, as the three spirits did to Abraham; sometimes in a dream, as they did to Joseph; sometimes in a vision, as to Zacharias in the temple; sometimes

in tongues, as at the Pentecost; sometimes by transfiguration, as to Jesus on the Mount, when Moses and Elias appeared in a materialized condition to him, James, John, and Peter.

Those manifesting spirits were not intended to be worshipped, any more than people in this life are intended for worship.

We view life on the other side of the tomb as we view all other questions, in a philosophical manner. Who are those on the other side of life? They are people who once lived on this side, and are just the kind that left here, no better, no worse. People change their conditions, not their natures, in the act of dying. A good man here is a good man there. A bad man here is a bad man there. An intellectual man here is an intellectual man there. A fool is a fool everywhere.

That spirits on the other side of life influence people on this side has been proven in all ages, among all nations, peoples, and clans. All classes, from the very humblest to the most exalted, have given proofs of spirit power. All Sacred Books and all religions are founded on this theory. All national histories furnish proofs of such power, and I will not presume to raise my voice against the evidence of the world repeated over and over again. They do in the other life what they did here, some endeavoring to upbuild, and some to tear down, as in our own human society.

From those various classes sprang the gods of

the Old Bible, who at different times manifested in one way, sometimes in another. A partial list of these I herewith append, from my former work, "Orthopædia."

The word God is mentioned over three thousand four hundred times in the Bible. Of course we cannot elaborate on each mention of the name, but must be content with a few quotations, which, we think, will suffice to show that there are many gods mentioned with no evidence whatever that they were all esteemed all-perfect, all-wise, or all-abounding in nature. The endeavor to make the Bible the mouthpiece of one God only is a conception of later times, that it may be made to conform to the genius of the age of progress. It seems that man-made gods must progress to keep pace with the people.

The word God, in the original, is Elohim, and Elohim is the plural of God. (Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, definition of "God.") Note the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, which starts out with an individual Deity, called God, a creator. In the very inception of the Bible we are plainly informed of the plurality of gods; for in the winding up of the six days of creation (Gen. I. 26) "And God (Elohim, gods) said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness." "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (I. 27). This ended the work of creation. God then rested from his labor.

The proper reading should be, "The gods created man in their own likeness. In their own likeness created they them. Male and female created they them. And the gods rested from all their labors." But as the Bible now reads, God is made to hold a conversation with other gods, and at the same time we are told there were no other gods for him to talk to. When God said, "let us make man in our own image," he must have been speaking to some other god, for there was no man to speak to at that time.

God, the Creator, now retires from view. In the second chapter of Genesis, the Lord God is introduced and another pair of human beings is made, not created; the first pair God created, the second pair, which was Adam and Eve, the Lord God made.

Gen. II. 5, 6, 7: "And there was not a man to till the ground; and there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground, and the LORD GOD formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

This Lord God then took Adam and placed him in the garden of Eden, with orders to "dress it and keep it;" but he had no wife and was lonesome, so this Lord God took pity on him, put him to sleep, and made a woman out of his rib. Now mark, this was after the six days of creation and was along in the period of the organization of business on the earth, how long no one knows;

but that it was after the six days of creation is certain, and long enough for an orchard to grow, which takes several years at least.

Gen. ii. 21, 22: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man he made woman, and brought her unto man."

The plurality of Bible gods appears again in the colloquy of Eve and the serpent, and the confession of God to the truth of what the serpent said. Gen. iii. 1-23.

Verses 2, 3, 4, 5: "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruits of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened; and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Eve ate and gave to Adam and he ate also, and then their eyes were opened and they saw that they were naked. God came down and missing the pair, called unto Adam, and said, "Where art thou?" The reader will please observe that God did not know where Adam and Eve were, nor did he know that they had eaten of the forbidden fruit until they confessed the sin to him. Had

this god been all-wise he would have known of his own wisdom.

Gen. II. 22. And the Lord God said, "Behold the man has become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever," he was sent out of the garden. Now this was the Lord God speaking, the same one that made Adam and Eve, and from his own mouth we are informed that Adam had become as one of the gods, working in harmony with them "to know good and evil."

The Jews, like the surrounding nations, believed that the gods held social intercourse and brought forth offspring; for we are told (Gen. VI. 2) that the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose, and children were the result of such marriages.

Verse 4: "There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and bore children unto them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown." It was very common in the days of myths to have gods consorting with earth-women and bringing up children of great parts; they never brought forth a dwarf, fool, or good man.

We now have a slight introduction to the Lord, one of the original makers of the earth, as quite a capricious kind of being; a being that had a heart,

one that was subject to grief, got angry, saw with his eyes, repented and forgave some, and destroyed the whole world besides.

Gen. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth. . . . And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth. . . . And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground. . . . But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Noah and his family journeyed to a plain in the land of Shinar and there commenced to build for themselves a city and a tower.

Gen. xi. 4, 5, 7. "And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded." This Lord was deficient in knowledge, or he would not have been compelled to go down to see what Noah and his people were doing.

"Go to, let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." The Lord was speaking to some other god and asked assistance in the work of confounding their language. There were grades among the gods, and of course gods of different powers, which Abram knew. Gen. xiv. 23. "Abram said unto the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord the most HIGH GOD, the possessor of heaven and earth." The lower gods he does not name.

Gen. xvi. 9-13. Hager saw an Angel, Lord and God, all in one being. Verse 9: "And the

angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress." Verse 13: "And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her: Thou God seest me."

Gen. xvii. 1. "And when Abram was ninety-years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto Abram and said unto him **I AM THE ALMIGHTY GOD.**" Verse 4: "Behold my covenant is with thee and thou shalt be a father of many nations, neither shalt thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham." Verse 9: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in the generations for an everlasting covenant, **TO BE A GOD UNTO THEE AND THY SEED AFTER THEE.**" This Almighty being was to be *a* god to Abraham and his seed. Not *the* God, but *a* god. And this god established a covenant between Abraham and his seed, and that covenant was circumcision. Verse 10: "This is my covenant which ye shall keep between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised." Those who are not circumcised do not belong to this god.

In the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. xix) several gods figure under different names. They were sometimes called men, sometimes angels, Lord, and God. In Gen. xxiv. 3, Abraham made his eldest servant swear by two gods not to make his son marry a Canaanite woman. "And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the god of heaven, and the god of the earth,

that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell." Had he spoken of the god of heaven and earth, he would have been speaking of one god. But he made him swear by the god of heaven and the god of the earth, evidently meaning two gods.

Gen. xxxi. 11-13. Abraham had a visitation from the god of Beth-el, who was simply an angel. "And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream saying, Jacob, and I said, Here am I; and he said, Lift up now thine eyes and see all the rams that leap upon the cattle are ring-streaked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban hath done unto thee. I am the God of Beth-el." Laban and Jacob introduce the God of Nahor, which is a new God.

Gen. xxxi. 53: "The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father judge between us." Gen. xxxii. 1: "And Jacob went on his way and the angels of God met him, and when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host."

We now come to a queer story concerning a great wrestling match between Jacob and God, which is certainly inconsistent with the idea of the Creator of all things, and the only rational conclusion that any one can come to is that the god here referred to was nothing more than a materialized spirit.

Gen. xxxiii. 24, 29, 30. "And Jacob was left alone and there wrestled a man with him until the

break of day. And Jacob asked him and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name? And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there, and Jacob called the name of the place Penial: for I have seen god face to face and my life is preserved."

If there is any doubt that this man who wrestled with Jacob was esteemed a god, and in fact was nothing more than a spirit whom Jacob recognized as god, and was in fact the god of Jacob, turn to Gen. xxxv. 1: "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto god, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." Jacob was fleeing from Esau when he had that wonderful wrestling match. In verse 11, this same god appeared unto Jacob and said unto him, "I AM GOD ALMIGHTY," but it took him all night to get the better of Jacob.

Jacob is afterwards visited by another god, who seems to be the god of Isaac, which fact this god made known to Jacob. Gen. xlv. 1, 2, 3: "And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-Sheba and offered sacrifice unto the god of his father Isaac. And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night, and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. And he said, I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down to Egypt."

The god of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was nothing more than an angel, and an angel is a

spirit of the advanced degrees who was one of the spirit guides of Moses. Exodus III. 1-6: "Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law. . . . And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush. . . . And Moses said, I will turn aside and see this great sight. . . . And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And Moses said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where on thou standest is holy ground. Moreover, he said, I am the god of thy father, the god of Abraham, the god of Isaac, and the god of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

In further proof that this god was nothing more than a spirit of limited knowledge and not a ubiquitous being peruse the whole third chapter of Exodus and especially verses 7, 8, 9: "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people. And I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians. Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come unto me."

Moses was then instructed to go to Pharaoh and intercede with him to let the children of Israel go, and when Moses objected this spirit said, I will surely be with thee, just as spirit guides tell their mediums that they will be with them in undertakings which are approved of by the spirit.

The children of Israel understood that there was more than one god, or spirit, recognized as gods of their fathers, and known by different names, just as different controlling spirits are now known by different names by their mediums.

Moses was anxious to know the name of the spirit, or god, that was talking to him and giving him instructions to undertake the task of delivering the children of Israel out of their Egyptian bondage. Verses 13, 14: "And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The god of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, what is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." "And this is my name forever."

Ex. xxix. 45. "And I will dwell among the children of Israel and be their god."

Ex. xxxiii. "And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Spirits often speak to their mediums in this way.

That there were many gods that the children of Israel recognized let the following verses give evidence:

Ex. xv. 11. "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praise, doing wonders." Ex. xx. 3: "Thou shalt have no other gods before

me." Now if we come across any other god we may know that it is not this one who wrote the ten commandments, for I AM is not to have his name changed, but he is a generous god and commands due respect to be paid to other gods. Ex. xxxii. 28: "Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people," says I AM.

We are now introduced to another god whose name is jealous, and who had not the respect for other gods that I AM had. Ex. xxxiv. 6: "And the Lord passed before him (Moses), and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." Verse 9: And Moses said, "If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my lord go among us, and take us for thine inheritance. Verse 12: "Take heed of thyself, (said this god,) lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee; but ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves; for thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is JEALOUS, is a jealous god." Yes, he was jealous and mean besides, and quite different in disposition from I AM.

Next we come to a warlike spirit, of whom there were many. Ex. xv. 2, 3: "The Lord is my strength and song and he is becoming my salvation: he is my god and I will prepare for him an habitation; my father's god and I will exalt

him. The Lord is a man of war. The LORD is his name."

Passing to Deuteronomy we are informed of the greatness of one of the gods of the children of Israel. Deut. x. 17: "For the Lord your god is the God of gods and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty and terrible, which regardeth not persons nor taketh rewards." If that be true, then he must have disapproved the practice of the children of Israel of offering sacrifices to other gods.

Joshua xxiv. 14: "Therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord." Judges x. 6: "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, who forsook the Lord and served not him."

In the tenth chapter of Judges, we have the combination of "an angel of the Lord, a man of God, and the Lord," all of whom were gods. Judges xiii. 2-23: The narration is too long to quote here, but the important points are as follows: Verse 3: "And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman" . . . Verse 6: And then the woman came and told her husband saying, "A man of god came unto me, and his countenance

was like the countenance of an angel of God, very terrible." . . . Verse 8: "Then Manoah entreated the Lord, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us." . . . Verse 21: "But the angel of the Lord did no more appear unto Manoah and to his wife and Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord, and Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die because we have seen God."

Ruth i. 11: "And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters, why will ye go with me." Verses 15, 16: "Behold thy sister-in-law has gone back unto her people and unto her gods." "And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, nor to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest I will go, and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy god my god."

We often find references to the god of Israel and of Jacob, but here appears a different god, the Lord God of Hosts. II. Sam. x: "And David went on and grew great; and the Lord God of Hosts was with him." Here is another god which administered unto David who had a special residence, which was on the Mercy seat between the cherubim of the ark. II. Sam. vi. 2: "And David arose and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah to bring up from thence the ark of god, whose name is called by the name of the Lord of Hosts, that dwelleth between the cherubim." I. Sam. iv. 4: "So the people

sent to Shiloh that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of Hosts which dwelleth between the cherubim."

I. Kings viii. 23: "Lord God of Israel, there is no god like thee, in heaven above or earth beneath, who keepeth covenants and mercy with thy servants that walk before thee with all their hearts." Judges viii. 33: "And it came to pass as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went whoring after Baalim and made Baal-Berith their god.

Judges x. 13, 14: "Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods, wherefore I will deliver thee no more. Go and cry after the gods ye have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation." Judges x. 16: "And they put away the strange gods that were among them and served the Lord, and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." I. Kings xi. 33: "Because they have forsaken me and worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemoth the god of the Moabites and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon."

Deut. xxxii. 16: "They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, they sacrificed unto devils, not unto God: to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your father feared not." Psalms cx. 1: "The Lord said unto my Lord Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

What Lord was it that was speaking to the

Lord of David? There were two Lords speaking to each other if we can credit the Psalmist.

We have the visitation of three gods in Daniel. Daniel i. 2: "And the LORD gave Jehoiakim king of Judah, into his hand with a part of the vessels of the house of god, and he carried them into the land of Shinar to the house of his god, and he brought the vessel into the treasure house of his god."

The book of Leviticus mentions two different gods. Lev. xix. 18: "Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. I am the Lord." Lev. xx. 7: "Sanctify yourselves, therefore, and be ye holy, for I am the LORD YOUR GOD."

Job was the most poetical genius of the Bible, and he presents various gods in his interesting narration. Job i. 6: "Now there was a day when the sons of god came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." In that verse there are three immortal personages represented. God is represented through his sons, who represented themselves to the Lord, and Satan, who is here mentioned for the first time in the Bible, and who appears as powerful as the Lord. Job seems to have had two attending gods or spirits; one was known by the common name of God, and the other Almighty. This distinction is kept up all through the book of Job.

Passing from Job, we come to Psalms, and in that transit we perceive a new conception of god. David intended the Psalms as songs of praise to his ideals. His gods were like those of Job, and administered their blessings and curses in this life; neither believed in a future existence.

Psalms iv. 4, 5: "Return, O Lord, deliver my soul: O save me for thy mercies' sake, for in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?" The Lord is the god of David.

Ps. vii. 1, 3: "O Lord my God, in thee I put my trust. O Lord my God, if I have done this." Ps. vii. 17: "I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness; and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high." Ps. viii. 9: "O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth?" Ps. xviii. 31: "For who is god save the Lord? Or who is the rock save our God?" Ps. xx. 7: "Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the Lord our God." Ps. xxiv. 9: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in. Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory." Ps. xxxi. 14: "But I trust in thee, O Lord: I said thou art my god." Ps. xxxiii. 12: "Blessed is the Nation whose god is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."

Here comes a new god. Ps. lxviii. 4: "Sing

unto god, sing praise unto his name: extol him that rideth upon the heavens by his name JAH, and rejoice before him."

Here we are introduced to a local god of one certain hill, he cannot be the God of heaven. Ps. XLVIII. 16: "Why leap ye, ye high hills? This is the hill which god desireth to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever."

Then David goes on to speak of his powers as a warrior. Verse 17: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place." Job XXIII. 16: "For God maketh my heart soft, and the ALMIGHTY troubleth me." Job XXVII. 11: "I will teach you by the hand of God: that which is with the Almighty I will not conceal." Job XXXIII. 4: "The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Job XXXIV. 12: "Yea, surely God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty prevent judgment." Job XXXV. 13: "Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it." Job XXXVIII. 7: "When the morning-stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

God certainly had sons, for that fact is often spoken of in the Bible, which proves one of two things: that is, that there was more than one god recognized by the children of Israel, or that Jesus Christ was not the only begotten son of God.

Hosea presents us with a business spirit under

the name of god; he must have been a Jew in his earth life, for he seems to understand all the tricks of trade. Hosea XII. 6, 7: "Therefore turn thou unto thy god; keep mercy and judgment and wait on thy god continually; he is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hands, he loveth to oppress."

Isaiah XLII. 8: "I am the Lord; that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

This does not comport well with the following: Ps. LXXXIII. 18: "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art most high over all the earth."

The Jews and Christian divines are pleased to ascribe to the name of JEHOVAH, the one true God, but we think the reading of the Bible in the light of the writers will not warrant that interpretation.

Ex. vi. 2, 3: "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the Lord: And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known unto them." Isaiah XII. 2: "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; HE ALSO IS BECOME MY SALVATION."

Here God and the Lord-Jehovah are two different gods, God is acknowledged his salvation and the Lord Jehovah is become ALSO his salvation. Isaiah XXVI. 4: "Trust ye in the Lord

forever, for in the Lord-Jehovah is everlasting strength." It is plain that the LORD-JEHOVAH is a different god from Jehovah.

We have many references to the compound Jehovah. Jeremiah xxiii. 6: "In his day Judah shall dwell safely, and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OF OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." The marginal note says "Jehovah-Tsidkenu." We have Jehovah-Shammah, Jehovah-Jireh, Jehovah-Nissi, Angel-Jehovah and Jehovah-Shalom.

Isaiah had a Holy One for a god. Isaiah xxx. 11: "Get ye out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." Verse 12: "Thus saith the Holy One of Israel."

In the New Testament, besides the Old Testament gods we have God the father, the Holy Ghost, and Jesus Christ.

Now if there be any question that God was esteemed a spirit by the Bible writers, we will call no less important witnesses than John and Paul. John iv. 24: "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." I. Cor. xv. 45: "And so it is written. The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit." II. Cor. iii. 17: "Now the Lord is that spirit; and where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

When the Jews were condemning Jesus for "being a man, maketh himself god," Jesus an-

swered, "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father has sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest because I said, I am the son of God?" John x. 34, 35, 36. So Jesus claimed to be God on the same principles that the Jews did in olden times. Men, spirits, angels, and demons were all called gods, or spirits, which meant the same thing only in different degrees of power or importance.

We assert, therefore, that by authority of the Scriptures we are warranted in saying that the whole Bible representations of God are unreliable fictions, that no one is warranted in following it for proofs of a Supreme Being as such, and if the Bible were all we have of a controlling intelligence of the universe we would be in the dark, with no way to extricate ourselves. For no one ever saw God; no one knew Jesus, nor the father of Jesus. Matthew xi. 25, 26, 27: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: AND NO MAN KNOWETH THE SON BUT THE FATHER; NEITHER KNOWETH ANY MAN THE FATHER, SAVE THE SON, AND HE TO WHOMSOEVER THE SON WILL REVEAL HIM." John i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any

time; the only begotten son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." I. Timothy vi. 16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting." If these last quotations are true, then we may relegate all the former gods of the Israelites to the region of myths, and think it well.

Following the fashions of earth, as all of these gods did to a certain extent, there must be queens as well as kings of heaven, for Jeremiah found one. How many more there were we do not know, for women were kept in the background in those days more than they are now. Jeremiah vii. 18: "The children gather wood, and their fathers kindle the fire, and the women kneed their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out their drink-offerings to their gods, that they may provoke me to anger." Jeremiah xlv. 17, 18: "For we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and pour out drink-offerings unto her as we have done; we, our fathers, our kings and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem; for then we had plenty of victuals and were well and saw no evil; but since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and pour out drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine."

What a travesty on the conception of the Ultimate Wisdom, Goodness and Power! No one can study the Bible conception of God and come to any other conclusion than that the Jews recognized many gods, and that those gods were none other than the spirits of dead men; of this fact many other proofs might be presented, were it necessary.



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